



FAMOUS  
MONSTERS  
#260  
MAR/APR 2012

A MOVIELAND CLASSICS, LLC MAGAZINE

# FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND

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CARTER  
OF MARS

TARZAN

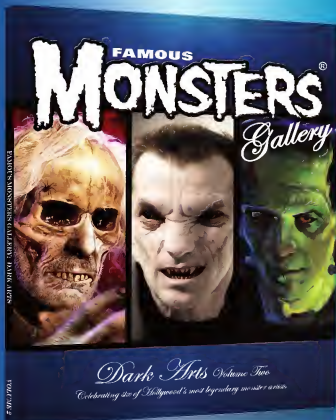
THE BOOKS  
OF EDGAR RICE  
BURROUGHS

JOHN CUSACK  
IN EDGAR ALLAN POE'S  
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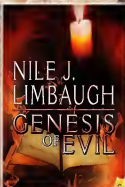


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NUMBER 260

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Dear (and thankfully not departed)  
Famous Monsters,

I've had a wonderfully wicked time enjoying your magazine since getting my first issue, No. 56, July 1969, at the eerie age of eight.

I knew then, that because of you, I was forever changed.

At that time I constantly dreamed of having one of my drawings or paintings printed under your **WANTED! MORE READERS LIKE** heading in your Fang Mail section. But at the time I was unable to get any adult help with, for me, the complicated process of mailing.

Then, as I aged, I, alas, also conformed to mundane mediocrity and my art style like-wise became status quo and would have been totally unacceptable for your creepy consideration.

Then it seemed for a while, you disappeared as I morphed into middle-age mania—UNTIL NOW! You're back and I've rediscovered you again and I've been reborn as the monster I was originally meant to be. So now I know how to mail stuff, and I hope you'll now consider my horror homage art worthy of making a monstrous appearance on your **PRINTS OF DARKNESS** page.

Keep on Ghouling guys! You're the greatest!

Sincerely yours,  
"Scary" Gary Woolard  
Clyde, NC

Dear Editor,

Hi,

Like millions, I grew up with FM and I am so happy it is back. Bookstores are going the way of whalebone corsets and easter bonnets, but I am still able to find FM if I look hard enough. I'd like to share a story about FM from my high school days (1971-1975).

I was a bullied, un-athletic, lachrymose teenager and loved FM and comic books. When I was a senior in high school there were several obnoxious bullies who tormented me in a history class, and the teacher did nil, and would often laugh.

I brought an issue of FM to class one day and the teacher became unglued, took it away from me, tersely told me never to bring them again, and called up my dad—which was uncalled for.

At the time I was very naive in many ways, and I sought refuge in the pages of FM and always loved Mr. Ackerman's plucky humor. If I could, I'd simply like to tell that history teacher how FM was read by future film directors and had a hand in shaping people's lives, and I'd also like to tell him that the only saving grace of his class was that my chronic insomnia was temporarily resolved for fifty minutes each weekday.

Cy Gaffney  
Chicago, IL

Dear Ed and everyone, I just wanted to share a few things...

I know I've been a 'harsh' critic with this version of FM and that's because this 'little' monster magazine and Forry had such a big impact on my life and my art. And I truly appreciate that you've all treated me with respect and have supported my art! I've noticed the changes in recent issues and they're great. I never really had a problem with you covering new movies, I just thought the classics were being slighted. Truly loved the Halloween issue, and any time Vampirella is covered is fine with me... since I've painted her several times.

As far as Christopher Lee is concerned, what can I say? I'm such a big fan. The very first Hammer film I ever saw was **DRACULA HAS RISEN FROM THE GRAVE**. I was ten and I thought it was great! He is such a fine actor and sadly the last of the legends.

And finally, I 'grew up' watching Tarzan movies as they were on Saturday mornings. And I just enjoyed so much movies like **THE PEOPLE THAT TIME FORGOT** and the others that were made in the 70's.

Thanks for letting me share.

Yours truly,  
Malcolm



Send your letters and art to:  
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# FM'S GUIDE TO VALENTINE'S SHOPPING

## GOREY DETAILS

With this creature of beauty allowing you to bestow your affections on her, it wouldn't hurt to surpass her expectations by checking out what this extraordinary site has to offer. You won't find any bouquets of roses or heart-shaped chocolates here—frankly, unless the recipient is a botanist, these gifts would be under-appreciated anyway. Instead, you will find such gems as the Curse of Ezekiel Wrist Cuffs, or the Morticia Pendant, which boasts jet and amethyst crystals hanging from a hauntingly gothic interpretation of a spider's nidus. If classic monsters are more her style, have her try the 1" Sterling Silver Godzilla Pendant on for size. Or perhaps she would more appreciate a pair of prowling Werewolf Bookends. Gorey Details is the place to go to find gifts to please any femme fatale.

<http://www.goreydetails.net/>

I was wandering through the store this past week when the hairs on the back of my neck suddenly stood up. I looked behind me, expecting to find an axe-wielding maniac. What I found was far more terrifying. I had made my way into the "Seasonal" aisle and was surrounded by shelf after shelf of pink heart-shaped boxes and "I Love You" teddy bears. I felt a pain in my chest. Heart attack? Nope. The pain of knowing that hundreds and thousands of monster fans, unable to find anything more suitable, would be forced to purchase these cliché gifts for their loved ones. I pictured the look on the face of a poor Monster Kid as a little piece of their soul died upon receiving the Sponge Bob-themed box of chocolates. I knew that we here at Famous Monsters could not let that happen, so we decided to provide some gift ideas.

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## TITAN BOOKS

### The Hammer Vault: Treasures From the Archives of Hammer Films

From its inception in 1934 to their more contemporary projects, Hammer Films has been a driving force in the world of horror, and has become a household name to anyone calling themselves a fan of the genre. Written by the official Hammer Films historian Marcus Hearn, this amazing compilation book brings together hundreds of rare props, designs, poster art, script pages, illustrations, and much more to take the reader on a breath-taking journey through the Hammer Vault.

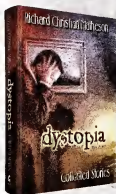
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# RICHARD J. SCHELLBACH'S IN MY WHITE MIND

## HOOKED ON HAMMER

**A**s readers of my column know, I grew up in the small town of Hamden, CT. And back when I was a kid there were certain geek truths. My parents, both sets of grandparents, and all of my friends' parents owned black and white televisions—only one per household—which they prominently displayed opposite the couch in their living rooms. And even though by the time I was eight or nine there were tons of series and movies on TV in color, everything was black and white to us. That's just the way it was. Hell, I was in my mid-teens before I realized that *DR. CYCLOPS*—one of my favorite films—was shot in color!

I spent Saturday afternoons at The Strand Theatre, soaking up everything they could throw at me, four hours at a time—two features, a bunch of cartoons, and a short. And there were geek truths in the movie theater, too. Musicals were in color. So were Disney and Warner Brothers cartoons. Big broad comedies were in color. Horror movies, on the other hand, were black and white. Ever see *JESSIE JAMES MEETS FRANKENSTEIN'S DAUGHTER*? I saw it at The Strand in 1966 on a double bill with *BILLY THE KID VS. DRACULA*, and they were both as washed-out then, when they were brand spankin' new, as they are now. In fact, thinking back, they were the most *uncolored* color movies I've seen to this day.

So throughout most of the sixties, my geek truths were:

- Horror on TV = black and white.
- Horror at the movie theater = black and white.

- FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND and *CASTLE OF FRANKENSTEIN* = black and white.

Then, one glorious Saturday afternoon in 1968, color came into my life. Not the color of horror movies I'd seen in the theater up until then. These colors were vibrant, bold... a stunning treat for the eyes. The film was *DRACULA HAS RISEN FROM THE GRAVE*—my first Hammer movie—and I was instantly hooked. The music was big and lush, the castles looked real instead of like miniatures, and there were beautiful wide shots of the colorful European countryside instead of medium shots of a studio with trees stuck to the floor.

There was also another dynamic that came into play that day. I was twelve, and at twelve years old, a guy starts feeling... decidedly *not* of this earth. At the beginning of *DRACULA HAS RISEN FROM THE GRAVE*, a beautiful, scantily clad blonde is found hanging upside down in a church bell tower with bite marks on her neck. And let me tell you, this girl wasn't "yucky" like the girls I went to school with. No, this girl had curves in places that I'd never noticed curves before. As I watched the girl in the low cut corset hanging upside down from that bell, besides



"Oh, come on! Just a sip."

being instantly smitten, I got my first lesson on gravity and immediately realized that gravity was going to be my lifelong friend. (Go gravity!) A few minutes later, when I saw Veronica Carlson for the first time, it was all over. Much like the colors in *DRACULA HAS RISEN FROM THE GRAVE*, the ladies of Hammer were vibrant, bold, and a stunning treat for the eyes.

*DRACULA HAS RISEN FROM THE GRAVE* started it all. I have always revered the black and white horror movies from Universal, MGM, 20th Century Fox, and so on for the classics they are. But Hammer Studios made the movies from my time. After all, *THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* is

only a year younger than I am, and I have only two years on *THE HORROR OF DRACULA*. And from that first day in 1968 until Hammer stopped producing movies about a decade later, I tried to see everything that Hammer made. Good or bad, they always had something that rocked my world.

In 1975, I was fortunate enough to attend the Famous Monsters Convention in New York City. Before I go any further, I'd like to bring something up: The '75 FM Con is a lot like Woodstock, in that it was such an important event in horror that everyone likes to say they were there. Of course, when you dig deeper, many people amend their stories to say that they were "thinking" about going or were on the way but the minivan broke down. In fact, anyone who was really there will most assuredly never forget it. I know the memory of that weekend will stay with me forever.

At the convention I had the good fortune to meet Michael Carreras, Ingrid Pitt, Barbara Leigh (in her Vampirella costume \*sigh\*), and the legendary Peter Cushing. All of them, especially Peter, were flabbergasted by the response they got from all of their U.S. fans. Peter joked that if he'd known he was so well liked in the States, he would have moved to the sunshine some while back. I honestly think that meeting the fans and feeling the love picked him up. He had never quite gotten over the death of his wife in 1971, and he appeared more frail than I had expected him to look. But as the weekend progressed, he looked better and better. He only expected to sign autographs for a short while, but when he saw the massive line that had formed, he smiled, sat down at the signing table and made sure everyone who wanted one got one. And he didn't just sign. He had a smile for everyone and made each fan feel like they had shared a few personal moments. When I told him that my mom—a huge horror and mystery fan—would stay up to all hours of the night to watch one of his films on TV, he signed an autograph for her, too. She even got to speak to him on the phone once. Through his remaining years, he and I had short phone conversations, and we mailed letters back and forth.

each other. I will always treasure those letters and those memories.

As beautiful as Ingrid Pitt is in Hammer films, she was even more breathtaking in person. I seem to remember her asking my name—pen in hand, ready to sign a photo—and I giggled like a school boy with a crush and said something incoherent that must have reminded her of Alfalfa trying to talk to Miss Crabtree. Yes, Ms. Pitt must have been very impressed with me. My only saving grace was the fact that most of the guys who met her for the first time that day probably sounded the same as I did.

The '75 Famous Monsters of Filmland Convention also afforded me the chance to see some Hammer films on a big screen in an auditorium filled with like-minded fans. Michael Carreras, who was also terrific with all of us, brought quite a few Hammer films with him—none of which I had seen. And if my memory is still giving me at least 75% of what it should, at least three of the films had never been seen on this side of the pond: FRANKENSTEIN AND THE MONSTER FROM HELL, THE SATANIC RITES OF DRACULA, and THE LEGEND OF THE SEVEN GOLDEN VAMPIRES. But don't hold me to it. It's been almost thirty-eight years and I have trouble remembering if I shaved this morning. I know DRACULA A.D. 1972 was in the mix, too, but I think that had played here by then.

To say that Hammer Studios played a big part in my personal geek journey is an understatement. They gave me the chance to see the work of some top notch writers and directors. They allowed me to see some wonderfully talented actors and actresses at the top of their game. And it still amazes me that, at one time, Peter Cushing, Christopher Lee, Ralph Bates, Veronica Carlson, Terence Fisher, Jimmy Sangster, Freddie Francis, and other immensely talented individuals too numerous to mention all worked for the house of Hammer. Looking back, they were the little studio that could... and did. And that's what always mattered the most to me.

Well, that and the cleavage.



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# AUGUST BAGONE'S LAND OF THE RISING MONSTERS

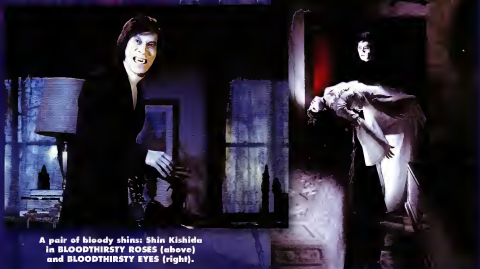
VAMPIRES JAPANESE STYLE:  
THE GOOD, THE BAD,  
AND THE BLOODTHIRSTY

Legends of supernatural creatures who seek the blood of the living have persisted for centuries in the folklore of cultures around the world, each with their own unique idiosyncrasies, a classic example being the Slavic origins of the Vampire myth. Today, the term "vampire" is almost exclusively attributed to the incarnation borne from the pages of Polidori and Stoker—which were steeped in the Eastern European folklore of the Undead. Even in Japan, when discussing "Kyuketsuki" (or *Bloodsucking Demons*), Dracula, above all others, is the preeminent image of the Vampire in Japanese popular culture. In the last year alone, productions concerning the Unholy have included titles such as *NIRVANA ISLAND* (based on the manga by Koji Matsumoto and produced by Warner Brothers Japan), *GOD'S BLOOD*, *FORBIDDEN MELODY*, *VAMPIRE GIRLS*, and *VAMPIRE STORIES* (produced by Geneon and Universal Entertainment), as well as animated series such as *BLADE: THE MARVEL ANIME*. And that's just the tip of the bloody stake. But what about more homegrown Japanese blood drinkers?

In the vast pantheon of Japan's supernatural things-that-go-bump-in-the-night, known as *Yokai*, there are several blood-drinking creatures, although few of them fit the familiar Eastern European archetype. Most of these *Yokai* are not necessarily spawned

from human death, and are rather sentient beings that exist alongside us in the twilight world before dawn. One such creature, the *Kaityo* (or *Werecat*, discussed in my previous column, Issue 259) feeds upon the blood of its victims—which also allows this *Yokai* to take possession of said prey. The *Kappa* (*River Imp*), a reptilian water-dweller that can be either benign or malevolent, sports a bird-like beak and a turtle shell on its back, and also drinks human blood (and in some variations, the blood of children). Then there's the pale-skinned beauty, *Yuki Onna* (*Snow Woman*), who literally takes the breath away from sleeping unfortunates trapped during heavy snows.

Perhaps the *Nukekubi* (*Disembodied Head*) best fits the more familiar conception of the Vampire. By day, these *Yokai* look and act as ordinary human beings, even living in groups that resemble nuclear family units. But at night, their heads detach from their bodies (which become inanimate), and the grotesque floating heads seek out victims to fulfill their desire for blood. Screaming in order to paralyze their prey, the creatures then sink their fangs into the victims' necks to feast. Seemingly invincible, the *Nukekubi* must return to their bodies by sunrise, or they will cease to exist. They can also be



A pair of bloody shins: Shin Kishida in *BLOODTHIRSTY ROSES* (above) and *BLOODTHIRSTY EYES* (right).



dispatched if their bodies are moved or hidden from their resting place.

While scores of *Kaidan* (Ghost Story) films have been produced in Japan since the early days of the medium, the first western-style *Bloodsucking Demon* appeared in 1959's *THE LADY VAMPIRE* (*Onna Kinkyetsuki*), directed by Master of Horror, Nobuo Nakagawa (1905-1984). Nakagawa, who brought the masterpieces *GHOST OF YOTSUYA* (*Tokaido Yotsuya Kaidan*, 1959) and *JIGOKU* (1960) to the screen, made his screen debut in the 1930s, but would posthumously be associated with the horror films he helmed in the 1950s and 1960s. Although he directed *VAMPIRE MOTH* (*Kyuketsu Go*) in 1956, based on the Seisho Yokomizu mystery of the same title, a very human culprit was responsible for the seemingly "supernatural crimes" of the story. So, with *THE LADY VAMPIRE*, we got the first full-blooded Japanese movie Vampire. The title, though, is something of a misnomer—the eponymous "Lady" is only a victim under the influence, and the Vampire in this film is strictly male (played by screen and television star Shigeru Amachi).

The plot of *THE LADY VAMPIRE* is a monster mash combining numerous

sources, but is credited on screen to the Soto's Tachibana story "The Catacombs of Beautiful Flesh" (*Chitai-no Biniwa*, 1958). Other sources include Rampo Edogawa's bizarre "The Strange Tale of Panorama Island" (*Panorama-to Kidan*, 1926), later adapted as a manga by Suehiro Maruo (available in English from Last Gasp). There are also major lifts from Seishi Yokomizo's "The Death-Head Stranger" (*Dokuro Kengyo*, 1939), published during a Vampire literature boom in Japan spurred on by xenophobia towards foreigners during the rise of the Imperial Military State. In this story, the sanguinarian main character, Shiranui, is the vampiric incarnation of Shiro Amakusa, who led the Catholic-Christian Rebellion at Shimabara in 1637.

In *THE LADY VAMPIRE*, the Vampire poses as a painter, Nobutaka Takenaka, a former retainer of Amakusa who, during the siege against Kisaragi Castle, drank the blood of Amakusa's daughter, Princess Katsu, with whom he was madly in love. He was cursed to live forever to seek out her reincarnated soul, which was perhaps taking a Tana Leaf out of Universal's *THE MUMMY* (1932). Also, unlike the classic western bloodsucker, Takenaka

is a tortured man by day (who must wear dark sunglasses) and transforms into a vampiric monster under light of the full moon—owing more to Lon Chaney Jr. than Bela Lugosi. But *THE LADY VAMPIRE* also reeks of European Horror, and is even shot like many of the Italian and Mexican Horrors of the time, such as Riccardo Freda's *I VAMPIRI* (1956) and Fernando Mendez's *EL VAMPIRO* (1957). Still, between the FREAKS-like menagerie in Takenaka's labyrinth beneath his European Gothic Castle and his sporting a Lugosi Collection knock-off cape, *THE LADY VAMPIRE* cannot be taken seriously, even on its own terms.

Despite numerous clichéd portrayals of Dracula on Japanese television, including cartoon caricatures and mutant space monsters, it would take a young director who would take the Japanese Screen Vampire seriously, and an iconic actor who would become the indelible image of this character. Together, they would produce two modern-day Vampire films steeped in Hammer Gothic. The director was Michio Yamamoto, and his actor was Shin Kishida.

Yamamoto (1933-2004), an up-and-coming young director at Toho Studios, cut his teeth as an Assistant Director on prestige







productions such as Akira Kurosawa's *THRONE OF BLOOD* (*Kammonsu-jo*, 1957). Working in both films and television, Yamamoto's first feature as director was the violent crime drama *RESURRECTION OF THE BEAST* (*Yaju-no Ekkatsu*, 1969). For his next project, as a professed fan of Thrillers and the Hammer Horrors, he was given an unusual opportunity to helm both films for a double feature of his own. At the top of the bill was *THE DEVIL BECKONS* (*Akuma Yondeiru*, aka *TERROR IN THE STREETS*), based on Kikuo Tsunoda's 1957 novella "Twilight Demon" (*Tasogare no Akuma*), about a young woman who falls into a world of madness and murder. For the second feature, he indulged himself into the world of Gothic Horror with *THE BLOODTHIRSTY DOLL: TERROR IN THE HAUNTED HOUSE* (*Yurei Yashiki no Kyofu Chi-o Sui Ningyo*).

Alternately known as *THE VAMPIRE DOLL*, *NIGHT OF THE VAMPIRE*, and *THE LEGACY OF DRACULA*, the first entry of what would become known as Yamamoto's "Bloodthirsty Trilogy" is rich in Gothic atmosphere, similar to the films of Terence Fisher, and punctuated with outbursts of sudden and brutal violence. Set in a remote European-style mansion, the compact story, written by Ei Ogawa (*AGE OF ASSASSINS*) and Hiroshi Nagano (*GUERRILLA WARFARE*), first unfolds as a mystery, until the horrible secret of

the house unravels to its supernatural core. Yamamoto seems to incorporate elements of Roger Corman's Poe series with equal parts of Alfred Hitchcock, and keeps his trilogy grounded in Gothic atmosphere within a modern setting (foreshadowing Hammer's switch to Swinging London). That being said, Yamamoto's films are arguably more successful than either Alao Gibson's *DRACULA A.D. 1972* or *THE SATANIC RITES OF DRACULA* (1974), despite their lack of "name" thespians such as Christopher Lee or Peter Cushing. With the success of *THE BLOODTHIRSTY DOLL*, Yamamoto was given the greenlight to helm a full-blooded follow-up, entitled *THE CURSED MANSION: THE BLOODTHIRSTY EYES* (*Yakata Chi-o Sui Me*, 1971).

*THE BLOODTHIRSTY EYES* is

better known outside of Japan under the hyperbolic title *THE LAKE OF DRACULA*, in an attempt by Toho's foreign sales department to better hawk the film to Western buyers. The screenplay, written by the returning Ogawa and Masaru Takesue (*RESURRECTION OF THE BEAST*), begins with a dream-like sequence of a little girl who stumbles upon a strange western manor littered with corpses and has an encounter with a golden-eyed vampire. Obsessed with these images, the girl is kept hospitalized for 18 years, and eventually must return to her hometown—the setting of her hallucinations. Slowly, it is revealed that the vampire haunting her dreams is quite real.

Yamamoto cast actor Shin Kishida in the role as "The Man Who Resembles a Shadow". Kishida (1939-1982), born



into an extremely talented family, is perhaps best known for his outstanding supporting roles—usually as villains—in such films as Kihachi Okamoto's **ZATOICHI MEETS YOJIMBO** (*Zatoichi to Yojimbo*, 1970) and Kenji

backburner for nearly three years, while Kishida's obligations to appear in several films and two television series kept him from participating. Ultimately, **THE BLOODTHIRSTY ROSES** was produced, but ended up as the supporting feature for Tom Kotani's forgotten youth film **HURRY, YOUNG ONES: TOMORROW NEVER WAITS!** (*Isoge! Wakamono-tachi Tomorrow Never Waits!*). Regardless, while the plot is the most straightforward of the trilogy, **THE BLOODTHIRSTY ROSES** ups the ante in flesh and blood, following Hammer's **TWINS OF EVIL** (1971). Also unlike the previous films,

Kurosawa), and suggests that he succeed him. But after a series of supernatural incidents, Shiraki soon learns that something is very evil at the heart of the academy: the headmaster and his wife are 200-year-old vampires preparing to take on new identities, including his. While the boarding school setting might recall **LUST FOR A VAMPIRE**, Yamamoto also pays homage to Roger Vadim's **BLOOD AND ROSES** (*Et Mourir de Plaisir*, 1960)—including a similar image of a white rose turning blood red.

Marketed by Toho's foreign sales department as **THE EVIL OF DRACULA**, **THE BLOODTHIRSTY ROSES** was eventually picked up (along with **THE BLOODTHIRSTY EYES**) by United Productions of America, who dumped both titles straight to television in poorly transferred, edited, cropped, and dubbed versions. Despite positive reviews of the films from both Kevin Thomas of the *LA Times* and Howard Thompson of the *New York Times* when the subtitled versions played in their respective cities, the Bloodthirsty Trilogy has never been given its proper due in North America. While some may find the concept of the classic, western-styled vampire in Japan to be a strange juxtaposition to swallow, the narratives of each film set up almost lyrical

howls and wails these creatures have risen from the grave in the land of the rising sun—which I personally feel are less convoluted than those offering none, as in Ray Danton's **DEATHMASTER** (1972), or those too crass, as in John Hayes' **GRAVE OF THE VAMPIRE** (1974). While Yamamoto's Bloodthirsty Trilogy does not stand on the shoulders of giants, these are still well-produced and effective gothic horrors with a twist, and deserving of a better appreciation. Take a closer look—if you dare. They aren't going to bite you. ...

August Ragone is the author of *Eiji Tsuburaya: Master of Monsters* (Chronicle Books) and maintains "The Good, The Bad, and Godzilla" at <http://augustragone.blogspot.com>



Misumi's **LONE WOLF & CUB: BABY CART IN PERIL** (*Kozure Okami Oya-no Kokoro Ko-no Kokoro*, 1972). Without speaking a single line of dialogue until deep into the picture (similar to Lee in Fisher's **DRACULA: PRINCE OF DARKNESS**), Kishida owns the role, thus establishing himself as a major cinematic sanguinarian.

While many western critics have cited correctly that **THE BLOODTHIRSTY EYES'** influences are to be counted among the Hammer Horrors—the demise of the Kishida's vampire is a reprise of the uncult denouement from Fisher's **HORROR OF DRACULA** (1958)—other influences they cite are off the mark. Neither Bob Keljan's **COUNT YORGA, VAMPIRE** (1970) or Jimmy Sangster's **LUST FOR A VAMPIRE** (1971) were released in Japan at the time. There is a strong influence from French New Wave.

The proposed third film of the trilogy, **THE BLOODTHIRSTY ROSES** (*Chi-o Suu Bara*, 1974), was put on the



A high-contrast, black and white close-up portrait of actor Christopher Lee. He is looking slightly to the right with a serious, intense expression. His hair is dark and slicked back. The lighting is dramatic, with deep shadows on the right side of his face and bright highlights on the left. The background is a plain, light color.

**HORROR AND BEYOND:**

# **CHRISTOPHER LEE**

**BY PETER MARTIN**



**A**s Hammer entered its twilight years, Christopher Lee was well-positioned to become a major movie star. He had a strikingly different "look," a distinct persona, and in *Dracula*, a character he owned—albeit a historical bloodsucker who lived outside the mainstream. To make the leap to full-blown stardom, he needed more vehicles to display his range as a personality, as risky as that might be. After all, straying too far from his horror roots might alienate his fan base and befuddle moviegoers who

were less familiar with the tall, dark, and handsome Brit.

Lee began the 1970s on an incredibly busy note. The first year of the decade would see ten films released featuring the actor—the busiest period of his career. There were the horror entries (*SCREAM AND SCREAM AGAIN*), oddball Jess Franco flicks (*EUGENIE, BLOODY JUDGE*), and no less than four appearances as *Dracula*, including an uncredited cameo in Jerry Lewis's *ONE MORE TIME*.

The one that could have truly broadened his reputation, however, flopped big time: Billy Wilder's *THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES*. Playing the puffed-up, supercilious Mycroft Holmes, Lee cut an elegant figure as the famous detective's spying brother. He was both persuasive and infuriating in the role, stepping out of the shadows as something other than a supernatural being, while still manifesting his deliciously dark, charming ways. After a disastrous preview, though, Wilder abandoned the picture, leaving the final editing job to others who "murdered it," in the famous director's own estimation. Little-seen during its initial release, *THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES* played regularly in revival houses for a while and eventually became somewhat of a critical darling. But it did little to widen Lee's career prospects at the time. As he turned 50, he was dependably menacing in *THE HOUSE THAT DRIPPED BLOOD*, *HORROR EXPRESS*, *THE CREEPING FLESH*, and other genre exercises, yet the sense lingered that Lee's full capabilities were not being tapped—and time was running out for him to make further appearances at the top of the marquee.

Make no mistake: Lee always turned in top-flight performances, even when it seemed that he was merely fulfilling contractual obligations (see sidebar on his final films for Hammer). Considering his bulging résumé, though, he was overdue to land a starring role as someone other than *Dracula*. Greater opportunities finally arose in Robin Hardy's *THE WICKER MAN*, Richard Lester's new version of *THE THREE MUSKETEERS*, and the James Bond adventure *THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN GUN*. But things did not go exactly as might have been anticipated.

British Lion, the distributor of *THE WICKER MAN*, had no faith in the film, insisting on cutting essential scenes before release and then burying it in the UK on the bottom half of a double feature, without any press screenings. Lee, believing it to be one of the best films in which he'd ever appeared—he later called it one of the top ten British films ever—personally contacted London film critics and begged them to see it, even offering to pay their admission fees. Reviews poured in, acknowledging *THE WICKER MAN*'s brilliance, even in its bowdlerized form. Roger Corman picked it up for U.S. distribution, and it became a cult hit, though without achieving the wider recognition it deserved.

Lee is superb as Lord Summerisle, a magisterial sort who can arrange for a young man to lose his virginity and then, inspired by the sight of snails, recite a poem by Walt Whitman—the latter being an idea that Hardy sprung on him at the last minute. He remains cool and calm, whether he is discoursing knowledgeably on the cultivation of apples or blithely blaspheming against the Christian God. He rules the island with a silk glove covering his iron fist, and he is absolutely chilling in the final scenes, convincing the doomed, righteous Sergeant Howie (Edward Woodward) that he has no choice but to accept his fate.

*THE THREE MUSKETEERS* showcased Lee as Rochebort, an elegant if subservient villain, the right-hand man and enforcer par



excellence for the devious Cardinal Richelieu (Charlton Heston). The one-eyed Rochefort may how reluctantly to his master, but he brooks absolutely no disrespect from anyone else—which doesn't mean he lacks a sense of humor. (See his reaction shots in the arrest scene as an elderly Spike Milligan attempts to load a pistol.)

As a member of a superb ensemble, Lee stands out for his sword-fighting skills. By all accounts, Lee does not suffer from false modesty, so he does not hesitate to say that though he was "much, much older" than the other combatants, he was a "far better swordsman." He is a completely convincing, entirely deadly assassin, whether fighting through a barn or sliding across a frozen river.

In the early 60s, Lee played golf frequently with distant cousin Ian Fleming, who one day told him he'd be perfect to play the title villain in *DR. NO*. By the time Fleming followed through, however, Joseph Wiseman had already been cast. Lee finally got his chance to go toe-to-toe with Bond after Jack Palance turned down the part of Francisco Scaramanga in *THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN GUN*.



Filming began in November 1973, about two months after *THE THREE MUSKETEERS* wrapped. Much later, he told *Empire Magazine*, "The important thing was that he had a sense of humor: he could be charming, particularly towards the ladies, some of whom, like darling Maud Adams, were terrified of him. He was totally lethal, totally ruthless." Lee received very positive critical notices for his work—*Time Magazine* called him "an unusually impressive villain"—but the film as a whole earned mixed reviews, and the box office returns were marked down from previous installment *LIVE AND LET DIE*.

Despite the splendor of Lee's key performances in the 70s, he never got bumped up to the top rung of the star ladder. As enjoyable as it is to watch him playing scary vampires and other mysterious figures of the night, it's even more fun to imagine how he might have enlivened otherwise straightforward Hollywood productions. He did so to some extent with roles in *KILLER FORCE*, *THE PIRATE*, *CARAVANS*, *CIRCLE OF IRON*, and *RETURN TO WITCH MOUNTAIN*. If you want to sample just one, consider the lackadaisical *AIRPORT '77*, the perfunctory third installment in the disaster series that featured an all-star cast, including Jack Lemmon, Joseph Cotten, James Stewart, and Olivia De Havilland.

## CHRISTOPHER LEE AND HAMMER'S LAST GASP

BY PETER MARTIN

Christopher Lee may have been ready to move on from his signature role by 1970, but Hammer, most decidedly, was not. Lee gently mocked Dracula with an uncredited cameo in Jerry Lewis' *ONE MORE TIME*, but he appeared as Dracula twice for Hammer in the same year.

*TASTE THE BLOOD OF DRACULA* revolves around three gentlemen who inadvertently prompt Dracula to rise from the grave to exact a series of revenge killings. Film critic Jeffrey M. Anderson notes that, "Lee has less and less to do and is beginning to look bored." Released six months later, *SCARS OF DRACULA* has the reputation of being a rush job. Lee gets considerably more screen time than in other Hammer/Dracula productions, though at the price of turning from a dedicated bloodsucker into a slasher-type serial killer, stabbing and impaling victims at will.

*DRACULA A.D.* 1972 has picked up new admirers in recent years among fans who take pleasure in the film's awkward attempts to depict a hip, groovy, "Swinging London" scene. Director Alan Gibson can't seem to decide if the tone should be ironic or sincere, undercutting the horror. Lee appears in the prologue with Peter Cushing as Van Helsing and promptly disappears until the movie's almost over. When he does show up, it feels like he's teleporting in from a much better movie.

Alan Gibson returned to helm a sequel, *THE SATANIC RITES OF DRACULA*, in 1974, along with Peter Cushing as Van Helsing; the setting remained as contemporary London. Popularly

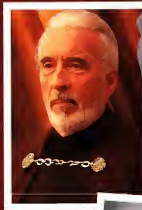
Lee plays a polite, meek man, married to the shrill Lee Grant, who suffers the humiliation of being cuckolded by his wife. After a charter jet crashes in the Bermuda Triangle and is submerged under water, Lemmon (as the captain) must undertake a risky underwater mission to bring help. Lee happily volunteers to come along; he conveys a heroic, self-sacrificing spirit, while also suggesting that the man would do anything to get away from his wife—he's simply too kind to say it out loud. Lee adds spark to a tiny role, with the bonus that he looks great in a three-piece suit.

Why didn't the bigger roles come? Was Lee getting too long in the tooth? That's the most likely possibility, even though a few other Hollywood stars of the day, such as Charles Bronson, were the same age or older. Lee, however, may have been too aristocratic, too regal in his bearing, too dare we say it—*British* to score with American moviegoers in a big way. But Lee never had a problem with skewering his most famous role, or poking fun at himself. Witness the previously-mentioned Jerry Lewis production, or the Sammy Davis, Jr. TV movie LUCIFER, or, even better, his funny parody of a German U-boat captain in Steven Spielberg's misbegotten 1941.

Good movie roles became increasingly scarce in the 80s and 90s, leading Lee to appear in more television shows among his less-frequent movie roles. He came back into vogue in Hollywood in 1999, when Tim Burton cast him in SLEEPY HOLLOW, followed by his embodiment of Saruman the White in Peter Jackson's THE LORD OF THE RINGS trilogy, and his dastardly turn for George Lucas in the second and third episodes of the STAR WARS prequels. He enjoyed a popular renaissance throughout the decade,

as new home video versions of the Hammer classics reminded modern audiences of his many talents.

Christopher Lee may never have received the opportunities his stature and abilities deserved, but he's always made the most of whatever role he's playing. Nearing his 90th birthday, he's still fully capable of transforming from frightening to heartwarming with a glint of his eye, as in his cameo as a book shop owner in Martin Scorsese's HUGO. He has always made his dramatic presence known, without calling undue attention to himself, a rare combination of talents in a long career to be treasured and celebrated.



referred to as "Dracula vs. The Avengers" (referring to the Brit TV show, not the Marvel superhero team), the film redefined Dracula again, this time as more of a James Bond villain, but the reluctant Lee had a minimal amount of screen time.

The final Hammer film of the 20th Century, TO THE DEVIL... A DAUGHTER (1976) is probably best remembered today because of a fleeting few seconds of nudity provided by 15-year-old Nastassja Kinski. That's a shame, because the movie—and Lee's performance—are quite good, right up until a disappointing finale. Lee plays Father Michael, the leader of a German church called The Children of Our Lord. He wears the garb of a Christian priest, but his order worships Satan. Teenage Catherine (Kinski) is about to come of age, and is needed to satisfy the order's deal with Satan. Catherine's father asks occult writer John Verney (Richard Widmark) to investigate; Verney quickly grasps what's going on and is determined to save Catherine from the Satanists.

TO THE DEVIL features one of Lee's quieter portrayals, which takes away none of its power. It's chilling to watch him smile as he takes a woman's hand and tells her, "You shall die now," or hear him telepathically calling Catherine to come to him with a whispered, urgent, demented smile on his face. The villainous Lee finally faces off with the virtuous Widmark, and their confrontation is a soft-spoken stand-off.

TO THE DEVIL... A DAUGHTER may not end with quite the "oomph" that we'd like to see from a Hammer film, but that's only because Hammer—and Christopher Lee—had established such a high bar of quality.





# THE WOMAN IN BLACK

**DIRECTOR JAMES WATKINS  
BRINGS HAMMER'S LATEST  
HORROR TO LIFE WITH  
STAR DANIEL RADCLIFFE**

BY HOLLY INTERLANDI

**A**lthough Hammer is most often associated with films made half a century ago, the film company has seen a resurrection in recent years. Under new direction, the UK studio has produced a number of films since 2009, including *THE RESIDENT*, *LET ME IN*, and now *THE WOMAN IN BLACK*, which is a melancholy ghost story starring Daniel Radcliffe and directed by James Watkins. *Famous Monsters* recently spoke with Watkins about his own horror history, early Hammer movies, typecasting, and the elements of fear.

**Famous Monsters.** As you well know, *THE WOMAN IN BLACK* is one of the first movies that Hammer Film Productions has made since they "rebooted", so to speak. I read an interview with you in which you said you were influenced by 70s movies. Were any of those movies Hammer movies? How has Hammer Horror influenced you, if at all?

**James Watkins.** The earlier films, certainly! Probably not so much the late 70s ones, but the early Terence Fisher *Dracula* and *Frankenstein* films. There's a very rich legacy. But it was not consciously that I was influenced. In terms of my approach to the material, the attraction was Jane [Goldman]'s script. That's what I responded to. The fact that the film is associated with Hammer is a bonus, but it was not the clincher. That said, we are what we

eat, and having consumed some of those films, there's definitely a certain similarity... even some of the lighting structures to be employed in terms of making a film with a really rich, saturated look—the deep reds, the blues, and the purple colors of decay... for me, that was very much influenced by looking back at some of the early Terence Fisher films, the early *Draculas*. At the same time, I've been just as influenced by Dario Argento. It's hard to figure these things out.

**FM.** It's a cocktail of influences. It always is. [Laughs]  
**JW.** Yeah, totally!

**FM.** Your film is a remake of sorts... although Jane Goldman based her script on the original novel.

**JW.** That's right. It's not related to the BBC film... or whatever television channel it was. It's going back to the source, to Susan Hill's book (*THE WOMAN IN BLACK*, 1983). We very much based it on that.

**FM.** Have you seen the original film?

**JW.** I have, actually. I only saw it recently. I wasn't influenced by it in terms of the making, but weirdly, it was written by Nigel Kneale, who wrote some of the early *QUATERMASS* films. And



QUATERMASS was Hammer's. So there's this weird wheels-within-wheels kind of operation, here. But I think our film is a lot scarier.

FM. Well, seeing as your background is on movies like the second part of *THE DESCENT*, which is terrifying, what could you bring to this movie because of what you've done? You did some scriptwriting, I believe, and your first directed film was *EDEN LAKE*?

JW. That's right. And that was a very, kind of dark and quite nasty horror thriller. It was much more explicitly horror, while this film is more restrained, and all about what you can imagine. I guess I have some understanding of the genre... I'm interested in the mechanics of it, and how it works. I'm interested in exploring our deepest fears. I think that's what appealed to me about the script—it was scary, but it also had a richness about it beyond what you usually read, in terms of the way it stroked our fears: fears of loss, the fears that parents might have for their children... which I thought were really rich and resonant, and something to get into.

FM. Definitely. Well, I kind of have to ask about the fact that Daniel Radcliffe (*HARRY POTTER*) is playing the lead. What do you think he brought to the film? I mean, he'll obviously bring an audience to the film that may have not wanted to see it originally.

JW. [Laughs] I just thought it was a really interesting challenge. Obviously I went and met with Dan before I signed up with him, and we managed to see the film in very much the same way in terms of what I've just said—the scares, but also the characters and the richness, what it was about. And I thought that Dan played his role very well. He's got a certain vulnerability about him that I thought would really speak to the

character of Arthur. I thought it was a rich opportunity, as well, for him. Whatever associations people might have... having played this iconic role, you think that the one image people have of Dan is Harry Potter. And I'm going, "You know what? You can change his image. He can change it, and be quite iconoclastic. Let's not necessarily put this person in a box; let's see what he can do in a different environment." Dan's twenty-three—he wants to have a great and rich career. I kind of connected with that, and thought that he really understood the character, and that's the most important thing.

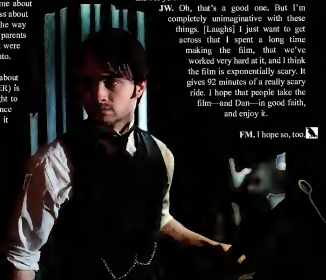
FM. I agree. And I don't mean to be insulting when I say this, but this is a very British film. The original novel was also English. How do you think it's going to go over with an American audience? I mean, obviously *Harry Potter* is British, as is Hammer itself, and they had no problem.

JW. That's a good question! I think the bottom line is if it's good or not. If it's scary and it plays as a good ride, I think it'll play, and through our experience—with all the audience tests and stuff you have to do—is that the film is. We've been getting that feedback strongly. It's easy to say that [the film] has a lot of stuff you don't see in America, but if people think it's a good story... I mean, look at *THE KING'S SPEECH*. It's a good story! I have faith in audiences. And to be honest, I can't do anything about it. I've made the film to the best of my abilities, and I can't really be philosophical beyond that.

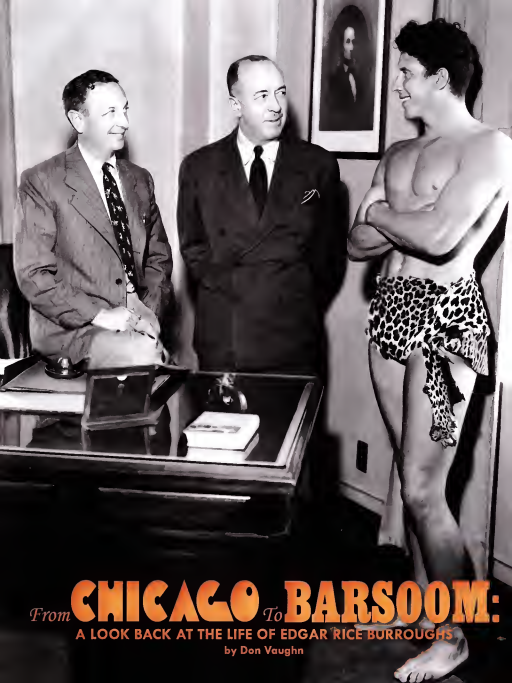
FM. Is there anything you wish someone would ask about the film so you could answer it? Something you haven't been able to answer yet?

JW. Oh, that's a good one. But I'm completely unimaginative with these things. [Laughs] I just want to get across that I spent a long time making the film, that we've worked very hard at it, and I think the film is exponentially scary. It gives 92 minutes of a really scary ride. I hope that people take the film—and Dan—in good faith, and enjoy it.

FM. I hope so, too. 







*From* **CHICAGO** *To* **BARSOOM:**

A LOOK BACK AT THE LIFE OF EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS

by Don Vaughn

In the pantheon of 20<sup>th</sup> century authors, few figures stand taller than Edgar Rice Burroughs. His novels have sold millions of copies over the past century, and his most famous creation—Tarzan—is one of the best-known fictional characters in the world, having been published in thirty-six languages.

Everyone knows of Tarzan—he's one of the few fictional characters to have a notation in the dictionary—but sadly, few people today are as aware of his creator. And that's a shame. In his heyday Burroughs was as much an international celebrity as writers such as Stephen King are today.

To truly understand Burroughs' literary legacy it's important that one know the man himself. His is a true rags-to-riches story, filled with as much adventure as one of his thrill-a-page novels.

Burroughs was born in Chicago on September 1, 1875, the fifth son of George and Mary Burroughs. By all accounts, the younger Burroughs enjoyed a relatively comfortable childhood, reports John Tahaferro in his definitive biography *TARZAN FOREVER: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS* (Scribner). He attended a half dozen public and private schools, primarily because his parents insisted on pulling him from one school and placing him in another at the first sign of a public outbreak of disease.

In 1891, their worst fears were realized when an influenza epidemic swept Chicago. Burroughs was 16 at the time, and his parents made the decision to send him to Idaho, where his brothers, George and Harry, had established a cattle ranch. Burroughs took to the cowboy lifestyle with gusto, riding horses, mending fences, and reveling in the physical nature of the work. But his range-riding days were short-lived; six months later, his parents enrolled him in the Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts. When that didn't work out, Burroughs was sent to the Michigan Military Academy at Orchard Lake.

Burroughs' time at the MMA had its ups and downs. Just two months into his stay, miserable and homesick, he deserted and took a train back to Chicago. However, he returned shortly thereafter at the behest of the school's commandant, Capt. Charles King, who told Burroughs' father that he felt the boy deserved a second chance.

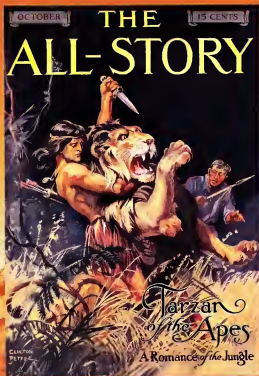
Upon graduation Burroughs attempted to enlist at West Point, but failed the entrance exam. He briefly returned to the Michigan Military Academy as an instructor; then, at age 20, decided to enlist in the Army as a private. He was attached to the Seventh Cavalry at Fort Grant in the Arizona Territory, where he quickly contracted dysentery. Upon his release from the hospital Burroughs joined in the pursuit of renegade Indians, though he never caught any.

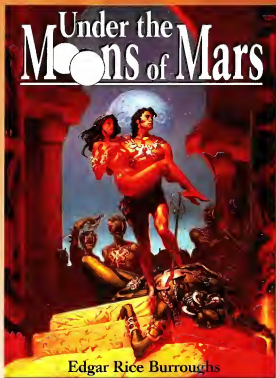
Many of Burroughs' adventures in the wilds of Arizona made their way into his novels, including *APACHE DEVIL* and *THE WAR CHIEF*. "A writer's own life experiences nearly always have a profound effect upon their work," observes artist William Stout, a lifelong Burroughs fan. "It usually is what gives a writer the qualities that make him or her unique."

In 1897, thanks to the intervention of his father, Burroughs—who despised his commanding officer and had grown weary of serving in the desolate backwaters of Arizona—was discharged from the Army. He returned to Idaho to work once again on his brothers' ranch. That was the first of many jobs that Burroughs would hold in the intervening years, notes George McWhorter, curator of the Edgar Rice Burroughs Memorial Collection at the University of Louisville in Kentucky. "I think he held something like eighteen different jobs before becoming a writer," McWhorter notes. "The most important was head of the stenography department at Sears, Roebuck & Co. They offered him an increase in salary if he would stay on, and he said, 'No. I want to be my own boss.'"

Indeed, Burroughs, who had married his first wife, Emma, in 1900, held an eclectic array of occupations before selling his first novel, including police officer, gold miner, quack remedy pitchman, and pencil sharpener salesman. According to the ERB, Inc. website, it was while working as the latter that Burroughs was inspired to try his hand at writing. Part of Burroughs' job involved checking the placement of the company's advertisements in various pulp magazines. The job left him with plenty of free time, which he spent reading. Unimpressed by the poorly written pulp stories stacked on his desk, Burroughs was confident he could do better.

The financial difficulties experienced by Burroughs during this period cannot be overstated. Before taking the job with the





**The original man of action: A lifelong equestrian, Burroughs excelled at all aspects of horsemanship (left). John Carter's premiere adventure under its original title (above).**

pencil sharpener company he found himself in an extended period of unemployment—bad news for a man with a growing family to support. Burroughs' financial situation became so dire, McWhorter notes, that at one point he was forced to pawn his wristwatch and Emma's jewelry to put food on the table. By the time Burroughs started writing *A PRINCESS OF MARS* in July 1911, he had moved on from selling pencil sharpeners to working at his brother Coleman's stationery firm. Here he found an abundant supply of old letterheads, the backs of which he used to write much of the first draft of *A PRINCESS OF MARS*.

Despite what Burroughs often told journalists years later, *A PRINCESS OF MARS* was not really his first foray into fiction. In fact, Burroughs had been writing for enjoyment since he was a child, and as an adult often created whimsical stories and rhymes to entertain his children, nieces, and nephews. His most industrious attempt at fiction prior to *A PRINCESS OF MARS* was a fantasy titled *MINIDOKA, 937<sup>th</sup> EARL OF ONE MILE SERIES M*, which he wrote for his children. The book did not see print until 1998, when Dark Horse published it with illustrations by Michael Kaluta.

Unsure how the publishing business worked, Burroughs submitted the first half of *A PRINCESS OF MARS* to leading pulp fiction magazine *ARGOSY*—more than 42,000 words—rather than sending a short synopsis. "Luckily, the editors liked it so much that they accepted it and serialized it [in a sister publication called *THE ALL-STORY*] from February to July 1912 with the title *UNDER THE MOONS OF MARS*," McWhorter notes.

Burroughs received \$400 for *UNDER THE MOONS OF MARS*, a tidy sum for a man in such financial straits. Written in the first person, it tells the story of John Carter, a dashing Civil War veteran and Indian fighter, who finds himself mysteriously transported to the planet Mars—called Barsoom by its inhabitants—where he falls in love with the gorgeous princess Dejah Thoris and proves his fighting prowess against an array of alien foes. Burroughs wrote nine official sequels and, in 1964, Canaveral Press published *JOHN CARTER OF MARS*, which collected two Barsoom novelettes that Burroughs had published in the pulps years earlier.

The success of *UNDER THE MOONS OF MARS* was immediate, and Burroughs rightly believed that writing was what he was meant to do. However, his second novel, *THE OUTLAW*



**One of Frank Frazetta's legendary paintings from the Barsoom series (above). Thanks to his idea to incorporate and publish his own books, Burroughs was able to enjoy the good life that eluded so many of his contemporaries (right).**



OF TORN, a medieval adventure, proved to be a difficult sale, and after much discussion with his editor at THE ALL-STORY Burroughs decided to put it aside in favor of a story that would ultimately change his life.

That story was TARZAN OF THE APES, published in its entirety in the October 1912 issue of THE ALL-STORY with a cover illustration by Clinton Pettie. The story was an immediate hit, and readers demanded more. In the decades that followed Burroughs published twenty-three official sequels.

Tarzan became a cottage industry for Burroughs, who wisely incorporated himself in 1923 so he could publish his own works. In addition to magazines and books, Tarzan appeared in numerous motion pictures (including THE NEW ADVENTURES OF TARZAN, a 1935 flick shot in Guatemala and partially financed by Burroughs himself), comic books, a radio series, and a popular newspaper strip. And then there was the merchandising, which brought (and continues to bring) even more money into the Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc. coffers. According to McWhorter, Tarzan has appeared on everything from toys and clothing to ice cream, cigar bands, and even a slot machine. "Burroughs was a very astute

businessman when it came to the value of his literary properties," McWhorter observes.

Tarzan and John Carter may be Burroughs' best-known characters today, but they are just the tip of his creative output. Over the course of his career Burroughs produced dozens of unrelated novels and short stories, most of which were serialized in the pulps before being reprinted in book form. They include seven PELLUCIDAR novels, five "Carson of Venus" novels, several westerns, a handful of historical thrillers, and even some contemporary fiction.

Writing made Burroughs a wealthy man. Unfortunately, he had difficulty managing his money well and spent extravagantly on such things as his ranch in Tarzana, California, thoroughbred horses, and even an airplane. Financial mismanagement was an issue that would plague him for much of his professional life.

In April 1940, Burroughs moved his family to Honolulu, Hawaii. He continued to write, selling several short stories to various pulp magazines. Then, on December 7, 1941, Burroughs' world exploded, almost literally. While playing tennis he heard what sounded like an artillery drill on the other side of the island. But

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it wasn't war games that Burroughs heard—it was the Japanese sneak attack on the naval base at Pearl Harbor. A call went out to all able-bodied men, and though well past retirement age, Burroughs didn't hesitate to volunteer. He performed a little guard duty, among other activities, then landed a gig writing a humorous column for the HONOLULU ADVERTISER.

However, as the world plunged into war, Burroughs wanted to do more. Specifically, he wanted to be where the action was, so he applied for credentials as a war correspondent for United Press. He was sixty-seven years old.

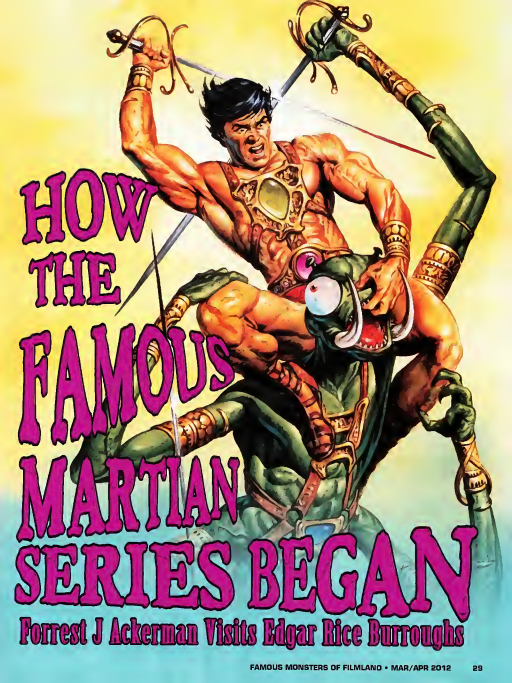
For the next several months Burroughs traveled with the military throughout the Pacific, roughing it right along with the troops he accompanied. Unsurprisingly, he was often treated as a celebrity since almost everyone he met was quite familiar with Tarzan and Burroughs' other creations. He signed numerous autographs and dined with the military elite, enjoying every minute of it. During his Pacific tour he filed an estimated 25 dispatches for United Press, but none saw print (Burroughs assumed they never got past War Department censors). After a brief respite, Burroughs returned to the war in 1944, visiting Tarawa and other locations.

Burroughs' health started to decline in the years following the war and his literary output diminished considerably. Heart problems eventually kept him homebound, and in his final days his only visitors were his children and grandchildren. On March 19, 1950, a maid found Burroughs slumped over the morning newspaper. He had been reading the Tarzan comic strip when he passed away.

"Burroughs' writing does not rank with the likes of Hemingway, Faulkner or Steinbeck, but he has served as a profound inspiration for great writers," says Stout. "His diverse following ranges from Gore Vidal to Ray Bradbury. In his critical essay on Burroughs, Vidal put forth that when it comes to describing action, Burroughs has no peer. So, if influence and inspiration are one's key criteria for judging a writer, then the best works of Edgar Rice Burroughs have secured their own place in the realms of literary greatness."

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# HOW THE FAMOUS MARTIAN SERIES BEGAN

Forrest J Ackerman Visits Edgar Rice Burroughs



For the better part of my life I had lived only an hour's journey from one of fantasy-fiction's most famous figures, whose stories of interplanetary adventure have thrilled millions; yet I had never met him. Having gone out of my way to shake hands with Wells Merritt, Hugo Gernsback, Frank R. Paul, Austin Hall and many other science fiction celebrities, I decided it was high time I paid my respects to the creator of Tarzan of the Apes, John Carter of Mars and Carson of Venus, who had long since introduced me to the strange lands of Barsoom, Opar and Pellucidar.

Perhaps it was because he lived so near me, in the same State of California, that I had contented myself with the thought that I could visit him at any time. But although their characters may be immortal, famous authors—even fantasy authors—do not live for ever. And Burroughs is getting on in years—73 to be exact, though he looks much younger. For I finally set eyes on him, and spent three hours talking to him about his work, hearing him confirm much of what I had read about him and deny what was mere legend.

He lives, as every Burroughs fan knows, in the San Fernando Valley, in the little community once known as Reseda, until his fame over-shadowed the town and gave it the name of Tarzana. Though we (three other admirers of his went with me) actually had trouble finding him. The gas station attendant couldn't direct us, and the drugstore owner was no help; he didn't even have a Burroughs book in his circulating library. None of the natives waiting at the Tarzana bus stop knew just where the great writer lived. I began to wonder: how famous is famous?

Then we found we'd got the name of the street wrong and had overshot our mark by about a mile, so we turned round and back. Finally we came to a large rural-type mail box bearing the Burroughs name; but the palatial residence I expected to find didn't materialize. The great, sprawling estate of my imagination was a modest six-room house surrounded by a garden and a lush green lawn, with an orchard in the rear. The house has a built-in porch, where the owner now spends much of his time reading.

Burroughs himself opened the door to us. We all liked him at first sight. He has aged, of course, since he posed for the familiar photo on the dust jackets of his books, but none of us would have taken him for his true age. Of medium height and stocky build, he has only a tinge of grey in his sparse hair. With two sons and a daughter, he has four grandchildren, the eldest a Burroughs fan of 16. And he has lived to see

science catch up with and outdistance some of the wild imaginings of his earliest writings. "In some of my early Mars stories," he recalled for us, "I made the mistake of describing 'amazing airships' which travelled at the 'incredible' speed of 200 miles an hour."

He led us through the living room, on the floor of which was a handsome black-and-white zebra skin, out on the porch. He took an easy chair beside which lay the scattered pages of the Sunday paper; nearby on a table was a pile of cartoon books. On one wall hung the ornate robe of an American Indian chief and a Japanese silk painting of a slinking tiger. A pair of Oriental equestrian statues stood on twin tables on either side, and by the door leading to the backyard orchard



was a huge vermillion jar decorated with aban elephants, monkeys and other jungle figures.

## Fortunes of Tarzan

Amid this colourful tableau, we talked. I asked Burroughs if it was true that he wrote his first stories on the backs of old envelopes, as I had read somewhere. That wasn't so, he said; but he did use letterheads which he had printed when he went into business for himself years ago, and for which he had no better use when, as invariably happened, his ventures failed. He was an unsuccessful business man for several years before he tried

writing fiction, and succeeded. So much so that his Tarzan stories, translated into all languages from a Turkestan dialect to Hindustani (not forgetting Esperanto), have sold 30 million copies; while a score of full length films adapted from his books have added to the rich profusion of his imagination. In addition, he has gathered a small fortune from the use of his universally-famed ape-man in newspaper cartoons and comic books. He has also been on the radio, with Burroughs' son-in-law playing the title role along with his daughter, Joan. Few dream-children have been as profitable for their creator as Tarzan, born 36 years ago and still going strong.

He also debunked the story that he began to write because he couldn't sleep. "I wrote because I was hungry, not through insomnia," he told us. "I had a wife and two children to support, and I wasn't making much money. But I did have a lot of weird dreams—both sleeping and waking. I thought I'd put them down on paper and see if they would sell."

He was the 35 and, having tried several different jobs—cowhand, policeman, railroad patrolman, salesman—was working for a patent medicine firm. It was his duty to check their adverts in the pulp magazines of the time, and he sampled some of the stories in them. He thought he could do as well, if not better; and so he began to write—but fast. In his early days, once he got started, he could turn out a novel in a month or two at the most.

His first story, "Under the Moons of Mars", ran as a serial in All-Story Magazine (Feb.-July, 1912), which for seven years previously had been featuring the fantasies of Garrett P. Serviss, George Allan England and others. He was paid about half a cent a word for it. I have a copy, which he autographed for me: some day it will be part of the Fantasy Foundation, of which I told him something. He wrote this story under the pseudonym of "Normal Bean" (a pun on "normal being"), but the name appeared as Norman Bean. Five years later, after it had been reprinted by the New York Evening World, it appeared in book form as "A Princess of Mars" (McClurg, Chicago), to be followed by the rest of the Mars series hard upon their appearance in All-Story, Amazing Stories and Blue Book.

But before John Carter continued his exploits on Barsoom, "Tarzan of the Apes" had made his bow in All-Story, in the October, '12, issue. He appeared between hard covers two years later, and was such a success that All-Story and Argosy leapt at the chance to publish his adventures through the decades before they were presented in book form for the benefit of his followers throughout the world. The Munsey magazine also first featured Burroughs' tales of the weird "At the Earth's Core" (All-Story, April, '14), "The Moon Maid" (Argosy, May-June, '23) and "The Moon Men" (Feb.-Mar., '25), the "Pirates of Venus" (Sep.-Oct., '32), and others. "The Land that Time Forgot," so beloved of early Amazing readers and all who grew up on his stories, and which he himself titled "The Lost U-Boat," was first published in Blue Book in '18.

## No Fantasy Man

I asked if he, as a youngster, had been fond of fantasy-fiction if, for instance, he had devoured Verne, Wells or Rider Haggard, but he said no. The second story he wrote was "The Outlaw of Torn," which appeared in New Story (Jan.-May, '14), though



he intended it to be a serious novel and did a lot of research for it. The effort wasn't wasted, however, as he drew on the material later for "Tarzan, Lord of the Jungle" (McClurg, '28). Of his 50-odd books published to date, nearly half of them concern his most famous character; there are ten in the Mars series,\* and four whose locale is the primeval planet of Amtor, or Venus."

The handwritten manuscripts of the first stories of Tarzan and John Carter are carefully preserved, he told us. The original "Tarzan" is still his favourite. "I re-read it a few months back. My memory was never much good, so every once in a while I get out one of my own stories and re-read it."

He also autographed for me one of the rarest of all his works, the novella, "Beyond Thirty," romance of a barbarian "Grabitten" (Great Britain) of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Century, full of wild men and beasts. It appeared in the Feb. '16, issue of Street and Smith's All-Around (formerly New Story) Magazine, and has never seen book publication. One of my fellow-fans handed him a copy of "Princino de Parso," produced in England in '38, and got him to sign his name in Esperanto—Edgardo Rajs Ruroz. He chuckled over it, asked how many Esperantists there were. I gave him the pre-war estimate of 12 million, and he seemed impressed.

Then we got to talking of space-travel. "What do you really think of a trip to



**Burroughs with Maureen O'Sullivan and Johnny Weissmuller, the best-known Tarzan and Jane pairing in cinema history.**

Mars or Venus?" I asked.

He considered. "Well, I don't think it will come in our lifetime, though some of the scientists seem to think so. I'd be interested in knowing what they found there, but I don't think I'd care to go with them myself."

One of us, fresh from reading "The Moon Maid," pointed out that in '26 he had practically predicted radar as coming in '40, in the shape of "an instrument which accurately indicated







the direction and distance of the focus of any radioactivity with which it might be attuned."

I asked if he had spent much time thinking up such names for his dream-worlds as Barsoom, Gathol and Pellucidar. "Oh, I thought them all out carefully," he assured us. "Characters' names, too. I discarded many combinations of syllables before I was satisfied with 'Tarzan'. I think the name of a character has a lot to do with his success, don't you? And I don't believe in describing them too accurately; I've never given Tarzan's actual height. I leave as much as I can to the reader's imagination."

But he wasn't too happy, himself, with Tarzan's transformation into a screen hero. He had thought of him, he said, as a pretty grim character, and the movies made him too humorous for his liking. He has his own projector, with prints of "The New Adventures of Tarzan" and other pictures, but he hasn't seen all the Hollywood versions of his stories. Of the nine different actors who have played the part since the silent days of Elmo Lincoln, he liked Herman Brix the best. "He was absolutely fearless!"

I suggested "The Monster Men" as a likely movie. He said it had been considered on and off for ten years. Getting back to books, I suggested a book of his short stories, including "The Scientists Revolt" (Fantastic Adventures, Jul. '39) and "Beyond the Farthest Star" (Blue Book, Jan. '42). He said paper was the problem; he would like to bring out two books a year under his own imprint, but had to limit his new editions to 10,000 copies.

The only fantasy volume, apart from a few of his own, which we saw in his den was Otis Adelbert Kline's "The Planet of Peril" (the story goes that Kline's "Buccaneers of Venus," which appeared in *Weird Tales*, was declined by Argosy because they preferred to use Burroughs' first Venus novel instead). A tremendous tiger skin covered the floor of this room, where we saw a collection of oddments including a stone turtle that Burroughs had dug up himself. In the hallway hung a real human head which its hunters had shrunk—and from which we shrank, he could never bring himself to touch it, he confessed. But there was a beautiful bronze statuette of a sabre-tooth tiger done by his son, John Coleman Burroughs, who has illustrated his recent books. With his brother, Bulbert, John is also a science fiction author; their stories have appeared in *Thrilling Wonder* and *Startling Stories*.

Burroughs himself is producing very little these days, but at one time he turned out a good 2,000 words every half-day. He

never re-wrote, and never wrote a character into a situation from which he couldn't extricate him, though often he had no idea how the story would end. He once tried the Dictaphone, but couldn't find a stenographer who could spell and punctuate correctly, so he continued to type his own MSS. Although he never had a formal education in grammar, a piece from one of his books was once used as an example of good English in a British textbook.

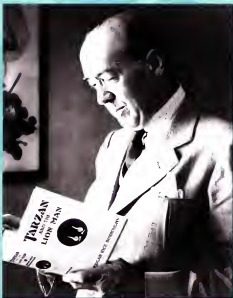
I got a glimpse of his personal bookmark. It showed an early conception of Tarzan standing gazing at a full moon riding a starlit sky, a big black ape crouched at his feet. Just before we left, our host produced an autograph book and asked for our signatures. Collecting visitors' autographs has become a hobby in recent years; we signed in his fourth book. As we departed he shook hands with all of us, said he had been honoured by our visit and what we had had to say about his work. "Not everybody is quite sincere," he added, "but I believe you have been. Thank you for calling, and if I don't recognize you next time I see you I hope you won't think too badly of me—I have such a terrible memory."

*"Order of the Mars series: 'A Princess of Mars' (1917), 'The Gods of Mars' (18), 'The Warlord of Mars' (20), 'The Chessman of Mars' (22), 'The Master Mind of Mars' (26), 'A Fighting Man of Mars' (40), 'Swords of Mars' (36), 'Synthetic Men of Mars' (40), 'Llana of Gothol' (48). Dates are those of book publication in U.S.A.*

✓ *"Pirates of Venus" (34), 'Lost on Venus' (35), 'Curson of Venus' (39), 'Escape on Venus' (46)*

*This article appears in its original form as it did in FANTASY REVIEW, January 1949.*

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# JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE MIND

By now I'm sure you've realized that if you haven't read the works of Edgar Rice Burroughs, you've missed out on some of the most exciting reasons to cut down trees and make books. But it is understandable that with so many to choose from you may feel a bit lost at where to begin. By no means is this intended to be a definitive reading list, just a quick primer on where to begin your journey into the many worlds of Burroughs.



**1. JOHN CARTER OF MARS:** There are three books that comprise the original John Carter trilogy (*A PRINCESS OF MARS*, *THE GODS OF MARS*, *THE WARLORD OF MARS*), a story about a Civil War vet who wakes one day to find himself on Mars (known as Barsoom by its native inhabitants), and is thrust deep into a conflict between the warring races of the red planet. Additional books in the series pertain to Carter's relatives, secondary characters, and even another visitor from earth. Mars' lesser gravity gives Carter superhuman strength and the ability to leap amazing distances. He is a veritable superhero who fights for the woman he loves and to save his adopted people as he battles monsters, flies massive warships, and travels to the ends of the planet. Truly Burroughs at his absolute best.



**2. TARZAN:** The series that made Burroughs a legend. Few literary characters have had as many incarnations as Tarzan. The story of a boy lost in the jungle, raised by apes, and becoming one of literature's greatest action heroes. was inspired by Burroughs' desire to show that even a man deprived of all modern conveniences could rise to greatness. From one harrowing tale to the next, Tarzan's journeys take him to distant lands as he searches for treasures, helps those in need, and saves those closest to him. I think what will surprise people most is that those whose only real image of Tarzan comes from old B&W films or kids cartoons will discover that Tarzan is a brutal savage with an often bad attitude that loves a good fight (with animals or humans or inhabitants of the earth's core—it makes no difference). Johnny Weissmuller this is not.

**3. PELLUCIDAR:** A series that influenced H.P. Lovecraft (especially *AT THE MOUNTAINS OF MADENSS*). Based on one of Burroughs favorite concepts—hidden worlds—the Pellucidar series tells of a world located deep within the core of our very own earth, inhabited by a variety of beings, initially discovered by a group of miners. The initial book in the series (*AT THE EARTH'S CORE*) was released just two years after the first *JOHN CARTER* and *TARZAN* novels and sees Burroughs at his action-packed best. The series is comprised of six novels and a seventh book of short stories. One notable element is the fourth book (*TARZAN AT THE EARTH'S CORE*)—which also serves as the thirteenth novel in the Tarzan series), where Burroughs' leading savage is recruited to enter Pellucidar on a massive airship to rescue one of the series' primary protagonists.



**4. CASPAK/CAPRONA:** A group of soldiers, lost in a submarine, discover a hidden continent at the South Pole where the rules of time and space are different from any place known to man. The three novels in this series (*THE LAND THAT TIME FORGOT*, *THE PEOPLE THAT TIME FORGOT*, *OUT OF TIME'S ABYSS*) each deal with an interrelated character and their struggle to survive. But instead of battling strange races of monsters, Burroughs populates his island with real life dangers, from dinosaurs and modern wildlife to roaming bands of prehistoric, savage men. But the island holds a secret, influenced much by the concept of evolution promoted by Mendel and Darwin, cutting-edge scientific ideas of the time. Fans of the TV series *LOST* will see a few familiar elements that played a role in the shows developments buried amongst the pages. But it's not just our evolutionary past that presents dangers for our heroes, but also our evolutionary future.

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# GHOST RIDIN' FROM COMICS TO FILM

by Mark L. Miller

For 40 years, Marvel's Ghost Rider has been an iconic image, barreling down the road of supernatural adventure with a blazing skull lighting up the night and a monster motorcycle covering the distance. When creators Gary Friedrich, Roy Thomas, and Mike Ploog collaborated to create the character in 1972, they couldn't have known that Ghost Rider would become the popular phenomenon he is today.

The character was originally conceived as a villain for Daredevil. Writer Gary Friedrich, who had created a motorcycle villain called The Stuntmaster, came up with another motorcycle-riding monster he called The Ghost Rider to take on the dynamic blind superhero that was rising in popularity at the time. Marvel Editor-in-Chief Roy Thomas thought the idea was much more interesting than a single appearance would indicate, and believed the character had the legs to support his own title. Mike Ploog created The Ghost Rider's costume by lifting elements of Elvis's 1968 Special jumpsuit (minus the sequins) and the traditional comic book Western snap-front motif. Although who came up with the visual of the flaming skull is up for debate, it appears that many hands were responsible for the Spirit of Vengeance we now know and love.

First appearing in MARVEL SPOTLIGHT #5, The Ghost Rider took over his own title a year later in 1973 that ran for over a decade and proved

quite popular with readers. Circus motorcycle stuntman Johnny Blaze makes a deal with Satan, offering his soul to save his stuntman stepfather, Crash Simpson, from death's clutches after a stunt gone wrong. Once the deal is made, Crash ends up dying again, and Satan (who later turns out to be Marvel's equivalent of the fallen angel Mephisto) compromises by saddling Blaze with a demonic entity named Zarathos. Blaze finds himself cursed with a demonic alter ego that sears away his flesh to become the Ghost Rider when faced by criminals—both supernatural and non—as he rides across America's highways.

At the time of the Ghost Rider's creation, a n t i - h e r o e s and

genre comics were all the rage at Marvel. Much of what was popular in cinema was reflected in comics throughout the seventies. Because of the growth in popularity of Bruce Lee films, the seventies saw the rise of the SHANG-CHI: MASTER OF KUNG FU and IRON FIST comics. Subgenres such as "Blaxploitation" influenced LUKE CAGE: HERO FOR HIRE and POWER MAN. And with horror films continuing to bring in big box office numbers, Marvel responded with TOMB OF DRACULA, WEREWOLF BY NIGHT, MOON KNIGHT, SON OF SATAN, and—of course—GHOST RIDER. Demonic subject matter was especially popular in film, with THE EXORCIST and THE OMEN terrifying theater-goers worldwide. Many of the unholy themes permeating those cinematic horror milestones show up throughout the GHOST RIDER series.

Ghost Rider's origins stem from FAUST, a tale of a man in search of great knowledge who makes a deal with the devil in exchange for his soul. Much like Johnny Blaze's tale, this gift comes back to haunt him once granted—although in the Faustian legend, the lead character's intentions are more selfish. Johnny Blaze makes his deal with the noble intentions of saving his mentor, thus fitting him better into the template of the superhero and making him appropriately flawed, a standb characteristic of the Marvel Universe.



Much like another popular Marvel character, the Incredible Hulk (otherwise known as Dr. Bruce Banner, who becomes a giant green hulking monster in times of great stress), the Ghost Rider's most common story casts Blaze and the Ghost Rider as a modern version of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, with Blaze fighting against the monster within him. The "Hyde" enacts vengeance toward criminals and burdens the character from having a normal life with Roxanne, Blaze's lost love. Through 81 issues, Blaze and Zarathos battled for control, reflecting the battle between reasonable ego and animalistic id, which has always been a common theme in comic books.

The Ghost Rider proved to be so popular that he found himself teaming up with the Fantastic Four's The Thing in MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE, Spider-Man in MARVEL TEAM-UP, and a mismatched set of heroes—including X-Men's Angel and Iceman, and The Avengers' Black Widow and Hercules—in the short-lived CHAMPIONS series. Blasting hellfire from his hands and performing all sorts of motorcycle feats of impossibility, Johnny Blaze and his alter ego fought everything from sideshow freaks to more down-to-earth villains such as the Orb, the leader of a biker gang whose disfigured face was covered with an eyeball-shaped helmet. The GHOST RIDER series ended in 1983 when Zarathos left Johnny Blaze, chasing Centurious, the man with no soul, allowing Blaze to have his happy ending with Roxanne. It wasn't until close to ten years



later that the Ghost Rider was resurrected in comics.

In 1990, character Daniel Ketch stumbled across the curse of the Ghost Rider. In this incarnation, the Ghost Rider was a leather-clad Spirit of Vengeance, incorporating a Penance Stare that forced the sinner to re-experience the sins he or she inflicted on others, as well as miles and miles of supernatural chains that seemed to be controlled by the Rider. The chains would become the Rider's trademark weapon of choice, used as a whip, hardened into a spear, sectioned off into throwing star links, or simply

used as a means to capture criminals. This version of the Ghost Rider had his own fair share of villains: the vampire Blackout, the crime boss Deathwatch, the mystical dream-demon Nightmare, the undying Scarecrow, the son of the devil Blackheart, and a twisted version of the Ghost Rider called Vengeance. The series, written by Howard Mackie and drawn mostly by Javier Saltares and Mark Texiera, followed Danny Ketch for 93 issues, ending with his own death.

Other characters bearing the flaming skull have been introduced in Marvel comics. They include Ghost Riders of






**Ride with the devil: Nic Cage's Johnny Blaze loses his cool, gets a bit hot-headed... has trouble controlling his inner demons. Ok, I'm done.**

the future, Ghost Rider 2009, and the Spirit of Vengeance, which was a member of the funaristic team Guardians of the Galaxy. Ghost Riders of the past have been introduced by writer Garth Ennis in the form of Travis Parham; the Western hero Phantom Rider once was called Ghost Rider and often displayed some of the same characteristics as the chopper-riding

hero—minus the motorcycle, of course. A female has taken the role of the Spirit of Vengeance in one of the more recent GHOST RIDER series.

Characteristics of both the Johnny Blaze and Danny Ketch versions of the Ghost Rider found themselves in Nicholas Cage's 2007 film GHOST RIDER. Directed by Mark Stephen Johnson, the cinematic

version of the Spirit of Vengeance incorporates the hiker motif, the Penance Stare, and chains of the more recent Danny Ketch version, while keeping the Johnny Blaze origin. Cage's quirky performance didn't win over critics, but it did warrant a sequel, GHOST RIDER: SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE, to be released this Spring.

The commonality of all versions of the Ghost Rider character is the flaming skull. In many ways, Ghost Rider is most popular as an iconic image rather than a complex subject of story. Though many marvel at the "Aww cool!" factor of the grinning skull surrounded by a halo of fire, few have been successful in framing a deft tale around it. This might account for the number of comic book series introducing new versions of the character that are swiftly canceled before the making of a sequel, despite critical satisfaction. Nevertheless, the image of a fiery skulled biker with hollow eyes and a fistful of flames roaring down the highway on a machine crafted from Hellfire is a frightening one—an image that will most likely be tearing up the highways in the pages of comics and on the screens of movie theaters for some time to come. 

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# TERROR THROUGH THE CINEMATIC AGES

## EDGAR ALLAN POE

BY MARK L. MILLER

Although Edgar Allan Poe saw enough fame during his life, the writer and poet had little understanding that his ideas, poetry, and stories would have such long and varied lives in the world of cinema, a medium that had not even been invented by the year of his death (1849). A list of the writer's literary work is as long as your arm and, depending on whom you ask, a favorite Poe story will have a greatly varied response. With masterpieces such as "The Raven", "The Premature Burial", "The Masque of the Red Death", "Fall of the House of Usher", "The Pit and the Pendulum", and "The Cask of Amontillado" from which to choose, there is a lot of material to plumb for those wanting to bring the macabre to the big screen. Poe's tales have been adapted, readapted, re-imagined, and reinterpreted since film first made way through camera, and audiences never seem to tire of seeing these tales of terror in their various renditions.

Before film was accompanied by sound, the life of Poe and his work saw light on screen. Silent classics such as *THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER* (1928), *THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM* (1910), *THE TELL TALE HEART* (1928), *THE BELLS* (1912), *THE GOLD BUG* (1910), and *THE MURDERS IN THE RUE MORGUE* (1914) were all adapted by filmmakers, using the vivid imagery made famous in Poe's work to scare and enlighten audiences. Charles Brabin's *THE RAVEN* (1915) dedicates much screen time to retelling Poe's complex and tragic life before quoting the famous poem. But when sound was added to the mix, Poe's name became all the more popular, and soon adaptations of his work began appearing above marquees year after year.

One of Poe's first sound adaptations was 1932's *THE MURDERS IN THE RUE MORGUE* starring Bela Lugosi as Dr. Mirakle, a mad scientist who gives women ape blood in order to find a mate for his own ape Erik. Though macabre for its time, the film takes liberties with Poe's original tale, which has been lauded as the first mystery by many literary historians. The story still stars Poe's detective Pierre Dupin (played by Leon Ames) as lead investigator on the murder case, but the story itself is changed from a locked room mystery to a circus sideshow horror adventure.

This wouldn't be the last time "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" was adapted. Roy Del Ruth directed *PHANTOM OF THE*

*RUE MORGUE* in 1954, starting a young Karl Malden as the mad doctor and Steve Forrest as Dupin searching for the simian murderer. In 1971's *MURDERS IN THE RUE MORGUE*, instead of an ape, the monster is an ax-wielding madman played by Herbert Lom (famous for his roles in *PHANTOM OF THE OPERA* and *THE PINK PANTHER*). Director Gordon Hessler (who also directed Poe's *THE OBLONG BOX*, *THE VOYAGES OF SINBAD*, and *CRY OF THE BANSHEE*) took many liberties with the story, making it more of a *PHANTOM OF THE OPERA* tale than Poe's original mystery. In 1986, a more faithful adaptation was made for television by director David Epstein starring George C. Scott, Rebecca De Mornay, and a young Val Kilmer.

"The Black Cat" has also been one of Poe's most adapted stories. Like "The Raven" and other Poe classics, the story is about a crime and the guilt that accompanies it: a murder is committed and the murderer believes he has covered his tracks, but a black cat continues to remind him of his misdeeds. The story first was adapted as a talkie in 1934, again starring Bela Lugosi, who this time teamed up with fellow horror legend Boris Karloff under the direction of Edgar G. Ulmer. The film has little to do with the classic story, but it is quite effective in its heavy doses of murder, psychology, and taboos such as necrophilia and Satanism. That same year,



the film *MANIAC* by Dwain Esper borrowed heavily from many Poe stories in its tale of a murdered scientist and the madman who tries to step into his shoes to cover the crime. A neighbor's cat proves to be the murderer's downfall when it alerts the police to the location of the dead body. In AIP's *TALES OF TERROR* (1962), "The Black Cat" was adapted again, but this time much more faithfully to the original story, with Peter Lorre as a man who is outed for murder by a cat after killing his wife's suitor, played by Vincent Price, and burying him in a wall. This would be director Roger Corman's fourth Poe-inspired film. Lorre's iconic persona brings the paranoia and guilt that permeated Poe's story to vivid life on screen. Italian horror icon Lucio Fulci took a turn adapting *THE BLACK CAT* in 1981, as did Dario Argento in the 1990 anthology *TWO EVIL EYES*. More recently, in 2007, during the second season of the *MASTERS OF HORROR* cable TV series, director Stuart Gordon reunited with his *RE-ANIMATOR* star Jeffrey Combs in *THE BLACK CAT*, in which Combs plays Poe in search for inspiration while tormented by a black cat.

"The Cask of Amontillado" has not been adapted directly, but themes of the story have found their way into many a film. The aforementioned *TALES OF TERROR* borrows Montresor and Fortunato as the main characters of *THE BLACK CAT* in the Corman classic. And TV's *HOMICIDE: LIFE ON THE STREET* takes details from the story when the team tracks a Poe-themed killer who buries his victim in a wall. "Amontillado" is also one of the short stories adapted in 2006's *NIGHTMARES FROM THE MIND OF POE*, along with "The Premature Burial" and "The Tell-Tale Heart".

The theme of being buried alive is common in Poe's work. 1962's *THE PREMATURE BURIAL* is another Roger Corman-directed classic, starring Ray Milland, that deals with the phobia of being buried alive, which was quite a common fear in Poe's day and age. In the 1935 film *THE CRIME OF DR. CRESPI*, a doctor gives a man a drug that induces a coma-like state, resulting in his burial. Frank Darabont's first film, *BURIED ALIVE*, is heavily influenced by Poe's classic, as is Fred Olen Ray's *HAUNTING FEAR* (1991) starring Brinke Stevens. The Hayden Christensen/Jessica Alba thriller *AWAKE* (2007), in which Christensen is conscious after being given anesthetic, and the Ryan Reynolds



**"Do you expect me to talk?" "No, Mr. Barnard. I expect you to die!" Vincent Price in *THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM*.**



**"Marry you? No, I said I wanted to BURY you!" Corman's *THE PREMATURE BURIAL*.**



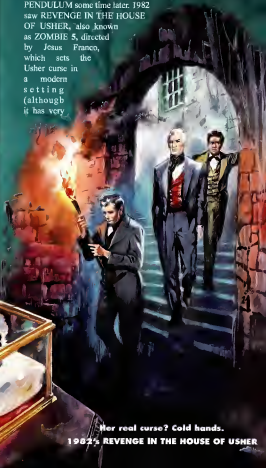


The shape of horrors to come in Poe's **OBLONG BOX**.



trapped-in-a-coffin nail-biter **BURIED** (2010) also borrow heavily from that theme without directly crediting Poe as inspiration. The subject of being buried alive also arises in **KILL BILL II** and both the Dutch and American versions of **THE VANISHING**.

The idea of being haunted by an early burial is revisited by Poe in "The Fall of the House of Usher", in which hyper-sensitive Roderick Usher loses his sister Madeline yet refuses to bury her fully in fear that she is not yet dead. The story was adapted in 1949 by Ivan Barnett, starring Kay Tindeter and Gwen Watford as the Usher siblings, but the film often is overshadowed by Roger Corman's classic **HOUSE OF USHER** (1960) starring Vincent Price (who played the lead in many of Poe's masterpieces). Both films were quite faithful to the original story, with Price offering up an iconic portrayal of the angst-ridden Roderick. The film was remade for television audiences in 1979 with Martin Landau and Ray Walston. Gifted animator Jan Svankmajer created his own version of the story in 1980's *Zánik domu Usherů*. Svankmajer would return to Poe territory by adapting **THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM** some time later. 1982 saw **REVENGE IN THE HOUSE OF USHER**, also known as **ZOMBIE 5**, directed by Jesus Franco, which sets the Usher curse in a modern setting (although it has very



Her real curse? Cold hands.

1982's **REVENGE IN THE HOUSE OF USHER**

little to do with zombies, despite the alternate title). Screen legend Oliver Reed plays Roderick Usher in 1989's *THE HOUSE OF USHER*, in which it is a pair of brothers haunted by the Usher curse, the other brother played by Donald Pleasence.

Influenced as much by *CITIZEN KANE* as it was by Poe's original story, 1941's *THE TELL-TALE HEART* by Jules Dassin adheres to the original closely, while lifting Orson Welles' then-iconic directorial style. The story of a man haunted by the deformed eye of his employer so much that he plots to kill him was reimagined most effectively in 1953's animated short by Ted Parnelle, which relies on surreal imagery and James Mason's creepy narration to illustrate the main character's guilty conscience. The short recently resurfaced as an extra on Guillermo del Toro's DVD release of *HELLBOY*. Ernest Morris retold the story in a hyper-sexual manner in 1960, with Laurence Payne as an obsessed man who kills a woman's potential lover and is then haunted by what he believes to be his victim's beating heart. In 1972's *AN EVENING WITH EDGAR ALLAN POE*, Vincent Price narrated "The Tell-Tale Heart" with three other Poe tales ("The Sphinx", "The Pit & the Pendulum", and "The Cast of Amontillado") in front of a live audience. Given that Price had performed so many of Poe's characters to perfection in Corman's films, he was the perfect choice for such a narration. More recently, Ridley Scott produced *TELL-TALE* in 2009, featuring a man haunted by the heart he received from an organ donation.

Possibly Roger Corman's finest Poe adaptation, *THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM* (1961), is a tale of torture cast against the backdrop of the Spanish Inquisition. Though Corman took many liberties with the story, he delivers a powerful tale of betrayal and jealousy. Vincent Price again stars, this time as Nicholas Medina, who becomes obsessed with the death of his sister, played by Barbara Steele. Thirty years later—differing from Poe's original tale, but using the Spanish Inquisition as a backdrop—Stuart Gordon cast Lance Henriksen as Torquemada, the Grand Inquisitor, and chose to tell a story more steeped in historical fact and romance. The central piece of the pendulum remains constant in all adaptations, despite changes to the story.


None of Poe's tales have been cinematically adapted as often as "The Raven", in short and long form. Boris Karloff and Bela Lugosi re-teamed for Lew Landers' version of the famous poem. Though the film bears little resemblance to Poe's work, Lugosi's character is obsessed with Poe and owns a torture chamber, while Karloff plays a murderer on the run. Karloff returned to *THE RAVEN* in Roger Corman's comedic take in 1963, which also starred Peter Lorre, a young Jack Nicholson, and, of course, Vincent Price. It follows a group of rival sorcerers and climax with Karloff and Price facing off in a magic duel—a far cry from Poe's original vision. Last but not least, in *THE SIMPSONS'* original "Treehouse of Horror" episode, Bart Simpson plays the Raven that haunts the narrator,

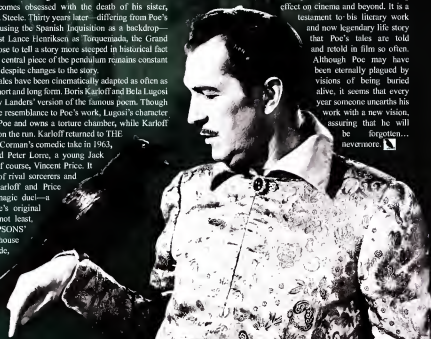
Homer Simpson, with cries of "Nevermore!" And more recently, John Cusack will star as Edgar Allan Poe himself in *THE RAVEN* as he investigates crimes that seem to have leapt straight from his poems and stories. The film, directed by V. FOR VENDETTA's James McTeigue, is set to thrill audiences very soon.

Other Poe films of note include *THE MASQUE OF RED DEATH* (the 1964 film was another Corman/Price collaboration) and Corman acting as producer for a 1989 remake *THE CONQUEROR WORM*, also known as *THE WITCHFINDER GENERAL*, which has very little to do with Poe's poem, save for a quote in the opening and closing credits. It starred Vincent Price, as well. Price also appeared in *TOMB OF LIGEIA*, another Corman-directed Poe tale of a man haunted by the loss of his wife.

Lately, Poe's influence has crossed over into comic books such as *BATMAN: NEVERMORE*, in which the Caped Crusader teams up with Poe to solve a mystery, and *IN THE SHADOW OF EDGAR ALLAN POE* from DC Comics' Vertigo line, retelling the writer's origin. True Crime novelist Harold Schechter also has written Poe as a crime-fighting sleuth, paired up with Davey Crockett in *NEVERMORE*, *MASK OF RED DEATH*, *THE HUM BUG*, and *THE TELL-TALE CORPSE*. Poe makes a cameo in Seth Grahame-Smith's novel *ABRAHAM LINCOLN: VAMPIRE HUNTER*, where he is mistaken for a bloodsucker. Actor Jeffrey Combs returned to the Poe role in a stage performance called *NEVERMORE... AN EVENING WITH EDGAR ALLAN POE*, which had a successful run in Los Angeles for a year and plans on touring other major cities across America soon.

It seems that more so than any other literary figure, everyone has a take on Poe's work and life. And whether faithful to the source material or not, Poe certainly holds a resonant and echoing effect on cinema and beyond. It is a

testament to his literary work and now legendary life story that Poe's tales are told and retold in film so often. Although Poe may have been eternally plagued by visions of being buried alive, it seems that every year someone unearths his work with a new vision, assuring that he will be forgotten... nevermore. 





# The Raven

by Justin Beahm

On Monday, September 27, 1849, Edgar Allan Poe set out from Richmond, Virginia; where he had been giving lectures and visiting family, to go back to Baltimore, the city he had come to call home. In his possession was little more than a few books and some manuscripts. The writer was next seen on October 3 at Gunner's Hall, a Baltimore tavern, dressed oddly and barely coherent. After being taken to the hospital, where Poe spent four days alternately battling with staff and languishing in a feverish hallucinatory catatonia, he died of what has been variously described as anything from cerebral inflammation to lethal alcohol intake. Exactly what happened to Poe during the days between September 27 and October 3 is the subject of much speculation, and on March 9, director James McTeigue lays out one possible fantastic scenario when *THE RAVEN* hits theaters.

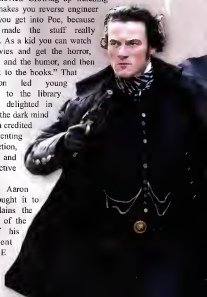
*THE RAVEN*, co-written by Ben Livingston and Hannah Shakespeare, tells the tale of a series of murders taking place in Baltimore, all of which appear to be based on the works of Poe (John Cusack). When detective Emmett Field (Luke Evans) and his crew are stumped, they enlist the scribe's services to unmask the killer, taking the celebrated auteur on a harrowing journey of loss and mystery, and giving an explanation of what may have happened to him during that "lost week" before he died.

The story, McTeigue is quick to point out, is a blend of fact and fiction. "This is not the biography of Poe's last days," the *V FOR VENDETTA* director explains. "I am saying, what if you took these last five days and had this great murder mystery thriller, and the killer was using Poe's stories, wouldn't that be cool?"

Australian native McTeigue came at the material with an

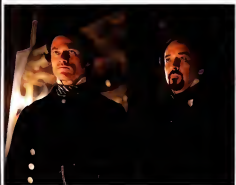
enthusiasm born not out of a history with the printed work of Poe, but a more cinematic familiarity. "I got to know Poe through the Corman movies. Growing up watching Corman makes you reverse engineer the way you get into Poe, because Corman made the stuff really accessible. As a kid you can watch those movies and get the horror, the dread, and the humor, and then head back to the books." That introduction led young McTeigue to the library where he delighted in exploring the dark mind of the man credited with inventing science fiction, horror, and the detective genre.

"Producer Aaron Ryder brought it to me," explains the filmmaker of the origin of his involvement with *THE RAVEN*.

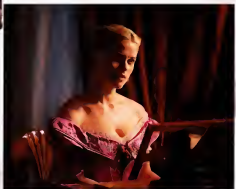




**Cusack embraces his dark side.**



**Detective Emmett Fields (Luke Evans) and Poe (John Cusack).**



**Emily (Alice Eve), Poe's "beloved".**

"I instantly clicked with it because I liked Poe. In the past, everyone had always gone for the bio pic of Poe's life, which is really hard to do. Ultimately it becomes quite depressing. Look at his life: his parents killed while he was young, rejected by his adoptive father, every woman he ever loved died of tuberculosis or consumption; he was always moving around, married his thirteen-year-old cousin.... This film took the construct of almost like putting Poe in one of his own stories, so you have this unique ability to weave in aspects of his real life and his work."

The crucial role of Poe ended up in the hands of Cusack, who was thrilled about the opportunity to flesh out one of his favorite writers. "I was all in at the very thought of playing Poe," shares the actor. "I was dying to play him and couldn't have said yes quickly enough. I wanted to make sure the screenplay captured his language, vocabulary, dexterity, and humor, and that it wasn't just a genre piece with Poe at the center. It turned out that was the farthest thing from James's mind, and we pretty much saw the movie the same way when we met."

Life-long Poe student Cusack elaborates on the blend of truth and creative license and his own care with the character. "Obviously this story didn't happen to Poe, but the attitudes and things that come out of his mouth are pretty well fact-checked. You look through the books on Poe and his letters, and his voice is pretty clear. I could always go back into the treasure troves of his work and pull a term, attitude, or turn of phrase. Poe was fascinating in that he was well aware he was writing to titillate an audience, writing pulp in a way, but was also writing masterpieces. I wanted to make sure we got the other aspect of him, and that was that he was a man of letters and one of the literary intellectual giants of his day."

McTeigue was impressed not only with Cusack's respect for the character, but also with an essential quality he saw in both Poe and the *HIGH FIDELITY* star. "From the first meeting I had with John, it was clear he got it. He really loved the new Poe and was willing to dive in. While John is so well loved, I think there is a darkness to him that hasn't been exploited. If you meet with him multiple times you start to see that, and I thought it would be good for the Poe character."

That darkness also bonded Cusack with the writer, and this is where the actor sees a parallel between Poe and the film's namesake bird. "I think everybody has [that darkness], and that is what makes him great. He was a pioneer into the subconscious and all the dark places and crevices where we keep things hidden. He had the fantastic courage to bring those things out. Plus he had an epic, totally tragic life, and was shaped by his experiences. I can completely relate to him as an artist. The raven was a creature that lived on the edge of this world and the underworld, and he was a journeyer into those dark places. A lot of great artists do that. I think one can relate to him just in the sense that he went there. You can follow these pioneers down there and get initiated."

"Poe was so absurd, and actually pretty funny, with a wicked sense of humor," Cusack continues. "He was a libertine, itching for fights with Wordsworth, Longfellow, anybody. He said, 'I will never put up with anything I can put down,' and didn't have a kind word to say about any other writer. He was at war with the world. There wasn't any reverence for anything other than the final mysteries of death and heaven and hell, the limits of one's soul and the limits of one's sanity."

Poe was reported to be struggling with various illnesses and



**Detective Fields is out of his league, oblivious to the fact that Poe is a world champion at staring contests.**

alcoholism at the point where *THE RAVEN* takes place, forcing Cusack to delve deep within himself and his past for inspiration. "My fear was how dark I was going to have to go to do it. I was ready for it, but it was an intense headspace to be in. You really do feel like you know what it's like to go as far into the abyss as you can before not being able to come out. I've been like that in my life, so there is a familiarity to going right to the edge of killing yourself, the edge of sanity. I think artists crave that and are drawn to that, so I can relate. That's as deep as I can go as an actor without literally losing my mind. I didn't eat or sleep. I just stayed strung out for about eight weeks."

Of the resulting performance, McTeigue says, "John nailed the different frequencies of Poe. He really dove in head first and embraced it and wanted to show a Poe that hadn't been shown before." Supporting Cusack and Evans are Alice Eve (*SEX AND THE CITY 2*) as Poe's fiancée Emily, and Brendan Gleeson (*GANGS OF NEW YORK*) as Colonel Hamilton.

The director reports that the film, shot in Serbia and Hungary, will not only deliver a strong performance in Cusack, but a graphic depiction of the horrors born of Poe's imagination. "I thought if you are going to do Poe, you have to do at least some of it quite graphically because his stories didn't pull any punches. In 'Murders





in the Rue Morgue', an orangutan slits a couple of people's throats. In 'Tell-Tale Heart', he cuts the guy up and puts him under the floor. There are definitely one or two moments in the film where you might have to look away."

Genre fans will also be happy to know McTeigue favors practical effects over a strictly CGI approach. "Visual effects always work better if you start with a basis of practicality. It just makes it more believable, whether you are doing prosthetics or models, and then digitally enhancing it later. It seems to suit the film, the period and style, and what the story was about."

Poe aficionados will find references to many of the writer's stories over the course of the film's running time, as McTeigue explains. In addition to the previously mentioned stories, "there's 'Pit and the Pendulum', 'Premature Burial', 'Cask of Amontillado', and then we've thrown a few lines in that reference 'Descent into the Maelstrom', 'Imp of the Perverse', and 'Fall of the House of Usher'.... There are little Poe-isms sprinkled throughout the story."

In the end, both director and star walked away with a greater appreciation for the man they worked so hard to pay tribute to. Shares McTeigue, "My love of Poe is even greater than when I started. The guy is a genius and a real character as well. It is hard to believe that he fit everything into his forty years that he did. West Point, newspapers, starting his own book companies, traveling the country extensively. He really came from a troubled upbringing to become this unique genius."

Cusack's final thoughts shed light on his love for a role he never dreamed he would have the chance to play. "I came out of it a little bit humbled and hopefully a little bit wiser, it was exhilarating. I miss playing him. I enjoyed it, but I can't say it was someplace I would like to spend most of my time. He was not only the first literary rock star, but he was the first tragic rock star who died too soon, and I am happy I haven't had to live his life."

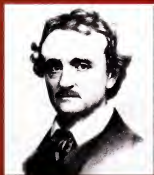


*Evangeline Ghashtly*  
*She's a whole other story...*

*'Forever Ghashtly'*  
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# HERE LIES EDGAR A. POE, MASTER OF MAYHEM AND THE MACABRE

## *A Brief Biography of the Poet & Author*

by Paul Jeffrey Davids

From the time that young Edgar began writing while still in grade school, he completed all his works in 30 years: about 64 poems, some lengthy, and 70 short stories. There was one work considered to be a novel (*The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket*), and a prose poem—*Eureka*—which was basically his attempt to describe the universe, physics, metaphysics, and all of cosmology and astronomy, including proposing something like the Big Bang Theory almost two centuries before it showed up as a TV series.

He was also a ferocious critic. As a novelist or poet famous in that era, one might hope to go unnoticed by Poe (fat chance!). Because whether they were Keats or Shelley or Coleridge or Longfellow or Dickens or any other of the literary gods of that time, Poe would surely find fault with their writing. And a lot of them didn't much care for him, except in France, where he became one of the only American icons well before anyone cared about him in the United States. He struggled, he scraped and stewed, he was betrayed, scorned, court-martialed, fired repeatedly, knew frequent heartbreak, and lived through every type of financial deprivation and health catastrophe known to man.

I invite you to climb into his shoes. Let's pretend you are Edgar Allan Poe. *This is your life!*

You were born in Massachusetts into a world where the steam engine would come to rule. You were born into an America that still had slaves. Though born in the north, you spent most of your early life in the south and became a southern gentleman. Slavery over troubled you. Your sympathies, as an adult, were not with the abolitionists, but this was natural considering the traditions of the Old South.

You were born into a world that had never known science fiction or detective stories, almost a century before silent movies would be invented and capture the public imagination. As for science fiction, you would invent it—and Jules Verne and H. G. Wells would owe much to you. As for detective mystery stories, you would invent those, too. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle would forever



be in your debt. Would there ever have been a Sherlock Holmes without your French detective Dupin preceding him?

Of course, horror stories would become your greatest legacy, along with vivid poetry, some of it horrific in its own way. Today every schoolchild has read or memorized the opening lines of "The Raven": *Once upon a midnight dreary; while I pondered weak and weary; / over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore.* Along came a raven who, tapping and rapping and nearly catching you napping, said one word and one word only: *Nevermore.*

And somehow, that one word assured that after years of toiling without fame or glory, you would be remembered.

But no riches came from "The Raven," the basis for many modern films. Some say you received nine dollars for it. Others say fifteen. The bottom line is that there were no reprint rights, no royalties, no sequel or prequel payments. You were ripped off.

Dying about a century before Roger Corman came along bad its disadvantages. If you had survived until today, you would probably own your own Hollywood studio.

But never mind the poverty for a moment. You would prove again and again what a romantic heart you had. Your poetry is rich with imagery about beautiful women who died young ("Lenore"). And so many of the women in your life, from your own mother to your young wife Virginia (your cousin, who passed away in her 20s), would die young.

Your mother, Elizabeth Poe, was a much-loved, beautiful stage actress. You inherited her dramatic talent in your vivid imagination, your sense of story, and verbal rhythm.

Your father, David Poe, Jr., was an actor who never received good reviews and who couldn't even stand in your mother's shadow as a performer. He took up drinking and deserted your mother and you. Your mother's death from illness when you were three years old threw your childhood existence into turmoil.

Fortunately (or unfortunately, depending upon how one ultimately keeps score), you were quickly taken into a well-to-

do southern home. You became the foster son of the Allan family of the state of Virginia. John and Frances Allan were like your parents for the next fifteen years or so, but they never adopted you.

In some ways, the psychological scars John Allan inflicted on you after behaving as a loving parent for many years sentenced you to a life of economic hardship when he easily could have given you a life of comfort. He became one of the richest men in Virginia, but there came a day when he would not give you one more dollar.

However, before you were cut off from the Allan fortune and forced to make your way in the world with no help at all, there were some good years of childhood. And as a child, John Allan spoiled you. He gave you everything you wanted and more.

The Allans knew you had many talents. You excelled at almost everything you attempted. You were an athlete. You outshined all your friends in athletics and even took up arduous physical challenges including long distance swimming. In school, you distinguished yourself. When the well-to-do Allan family moved to England for several years, the teachers quickly had you pegged as their favorite. You read so much and mastered the meaning and intent of much literature. The town in Scotland where you lived (where John Allan was born) was also the home town of writer Daniel Defoe, who wrote *ROBINSON CRUSOE* about one century before you were born. How you loved that book! And how many times you read it! It helped you as a writer, teaching you precision and detailed description.

Your foster father was proud of you then, for a brief time. If only you had remained true to him, and he to you, but that wasn't to be. When John Allan came into his inheritance from his uncle, making him incredibly rich, your future security could have been assured if you didn't do everything you could think of to spoil it.

You had strong self-knowledge and you revealed, in one of your short stories, what your principle problem was in life. That story was called "The Imp of the Perverse". It was about how people can be the source of their own undoing. It told how there is a little imp in the brain which dares us again and again to go against our better judgment. An imp that makes us take horrible risks. An imp who convinces us to push every situation in life into something dangerous and self-destructive. And that described you perfectly.

You allowed your "Imp of the Perverse" to rule you.

Part of the problem was alcohol. When John Allan sent you to college, you drank and gambled. You were a miserable gambler, and John Allan resented having to clean up your gambling debts.

After one semester, he stopped paying for you to go to the university (where old man Thomas Jefferson had once shown up personally). Your only choice then was to join the army. And when you self-published your first book of poems and could no longer tolerate being an enlisted man, you appealed to John Allan for help. He ignored you. He didn't even write you to tell you that your foster mother, Frances Allan, was deathly ill.

After Frances died, John Allan reconciled with you briefly. He supported your effort to gain an appointment to the U.S. military academy at West Point. That also turned to disaster.

In spite of your own personal imp of the perverse, you somehow were entirely confident of your eventual success. Your first book of self-published poems is very rare today. One single copy has sold at auction for over \$600,000.

You were determined to be the first American writer to support himself entirely with his writing. And you did an admirable job, considering the terrible circumstances. There were no copyright laws protecting European writers, so why would American publishers want to publish your work when they could publish Charles Dickens for free? You gradually worked your way onto the staff of the Southern Literary Messenger as assistant editor. They published and helped place some of your early stories. With a small salary, you even secretly married your thirteen year old cousin, Virginia, whom you deeply loved. You both lied about her age on the marriage certificate. And then you were fired for drinking.

But somehow, no matter what the disaster in your personal life, you always kept writing. In your day, some suspected you of living an immoral life, of being a drug addict, or being sinister and perverse. The truth was rather different, though. You were a handsome gentleman, polished and charming and sweet to the ladies, a captivating public speaker, some said considerate, and somewhat modest. It was only your imagination that was dark, and therein you knew a world without limits. The horrors of your black cat whose eye one of your characters sliced out, the terror



The old home of Edgar Allan Poe, as it originally stood on Kingsbridge Road.

## A WORD ABOUT THE POE HOUSE IN BALTIMORE

Poe fans, literary geeks, and artistic intellectuals, take note: at 203 Amity Street in Baltimore, there is an old house—originally built in 1830—that is historically significant for being Edgar Allan Poe's place of residence for several years of his life. There is a museum in the house, featuring artifacts and walk-through art displays. The Poe Society of Baltimore also hosts several events a year at the museum. Now, however, the very existence of that museum is in peril. Cash-strapped Baltimore has cut off the museum's \$85,000 annual budget, and unless a lot of Famous Monsters send a lot of money, its doors may close forever.

The Poe House is still accepting donations. Heed the call. Send a few bucks. Help Jeff Jerome, the curator of the Poe House Museum, keep the faith. Checks and money orders should be made out to the Director of Finance and sent to Jeff Jerome, Department of Planning, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, 417 East Fayette Street, Baltimore, MD, 21202.

Even a letter or call to the mayor in support of the Poe House can help! Send an email message by logging on at <http://www.baltimorecity.gov/OfficeoftheMayor/ContactTheMayor.asp>.



of the old man with the roaming eye whose heart kept beating after death, the nightmare of the pendulum that would slice a prisoner in half as he lay chained in the pit—or the premature burials and those who awoke from death—even the Masque of Red Death itself.... they all led a dark and macabre existence in your mind and on your pages. You live today in the public imagination because no one else could delve into horror the way you did. For that you are remembered.

As for your literary skill, it is debated still. Mark Twain thought your writing mediocre and dull. Baudelaire, who translated your works into French and wrote introductions, thought you were a literary genius of the highest order.

The circumstances of your death remain an unsolved mystery. Some still suspect foul play. There is a theory that the angry brothers of one of your lovers beat you up, forced you to drink a lethal amount of alcohol, and left you for dead in a Baltimore alley. No one can explain how you were found wearing clothes not your own, or what you meant as you stammered incoherently for a few hours before you passed away. But regardless of the cause of your death, or the fact that only a handful of mourners showed up when you were buried, there are many who now worship you as a literary god. Those of us at FAMOUS MONSTERS praise your courage and your gifts of literary treasures that forever endure.



*Fans of Poe are no doubt familiar with one of his most popular short stories, "The Tell-Tale Heart" (first published in 1843). We spoke with Director John LaTier about his upcoming film based on the timeless tale, who told us that in addition to fleshing out the story, he also gave a "vulture's eye" wink to a few other classics of literature and Poe-try!*

**Famous Monsters.**

A reading of the short story by Edgar Allan Poe clocks in at just under 15 minutes. How did you expand that to a feature length story?

**John LaTier.** When I first started working on the screenplay, I immersed myself in Poe's work. From "The Black Cat" to his prose poem "Eureka," I found inspiration throughout the pages to create a story based in the world of the "The Tell-Tale Heart" that stayed true to all of Poe's dark fantasies.

**FM.** Have the characters been updated for modern times, or is this still largely a "gothic period piece" horror story?

**JLT.** It is a modern film, but in a timeless setting. I tried to explore the city of New Orleans and use its vintage exterior to create a world unique to itself.

**FM.** Does TTTH delve into the narrator's "extreme senses?"

**JLT.** "The Tell-Tale Heart" explores all the senses. This was a big part of the description in the screenplay.

**FM.** Will there be any nods to other E. A. Poe stories or poems in the film?

**JLT.** You will see quite a few nods throughout, but nothing so extreme that if you're not versed in Poe, you won't get it. I tried to make the entire movie a reference to Poe's work.

# THE TELL-TALE HEART

BY SEAN FERNALD

**FM.** The original short story didn't feature a female character. How does Rose McGowan figure into the story?

**JLT.** Rose plays the classic femme fatale in this movie. I wanted to have a driving force between the old man and Shaun, and what better force than a love interest?

**FM.** Were any of the actors E. A. Poe fans? What are the participants' early memories of POE (or this story in particular).

**JLT.** Rose read Poe when she was 4 years old and would spend time in Italy with her head to the floorboards, listening for the beating heart. We both shared a love for Poe and it made working together on the film an amazing experience.

*We also got a chance to run this quick query by Patrick John Flueger (the film's Narrator, fresh off of this summer's FOOTLOOSE):*

**FM.** From FOOTLOOSE to TTTH... that's quite a change.

What was the key factor that appealed to you with this role?

**PJF.** In Footloose, I was the bad guy, and in this one, I guess I'm the hero, even though I do bad things, so that's really different. Shaun's character is really interesting, because it is a much darker role in a lot of

ways. 



I've had much contention with my English professors about what constitutes a "Best Of" Edgar Allan Poe. Given the number of times I had to read it during my high school and college career, I'm guessing "The Fall of the House of Usher" would make their list. Perhaps it's due to the scholarly overexposure, but I must vehemently disagree. I've always been one to trumpet about the lesser-known works of a given literary guru in place of the so-called classics (FRANNY AND ZOOEY over CATCHER IN THE RYE, THE ILIAD over THE ODYSSEY, "A Hunger Artist" over "Metamorphosis", the sonnets over the plays). Any textbook will tell you to read "The Pit and the Pendulum". I'm here to champion the words you might have missed but remain just as vital. So rather than attempting a list of "essentials", I've decided to expound upon five pieces that strive to encompass Poe's versatility as a writer. The man has, after all, influenced everyone from Tim Burton to Terry Pratchett, and such a diverse legacy requires an equally diverse body of work.

I must begin with a study of Poe's strengths by exhibiting his rather obvious penchant for atmosphere—a talent picked up not-so-subtly by authors such as H.P. Lovecraft and Ambrose Bierce. No story of Poe's is a better example of foreboding atmosphere than "The Masque of Red Death"—a story which, it might be argued, consists almost entirely of atmosphere save for the final few paragraphs. An overproud prince creates an artificial barrier against natural disease, and in celebration of doing so successfully (or so he thinks), throws a masquerade ball seven rooms deep. The images reign, here: discolored stained glass, velvet tapestries, candelabras, the chiming of a grandfather clock—all of these are classic Poe, and they create the kind of setting that a personification of the horrific disease may enter without throwing the story into an obnoxious metaphorical vacuum.

Given Poe's reputation for the macabre, the desolate, and the inhumanly horrifying, the droll tale "Angel of the Odd" might seem like an anomaly among his pages. But please, don't miss it. It sets itself up to be a classic tale of "woe" until the inebriated main character reads about one of the many singular human interest items in the newspaper and proceeds to hallucinate a creature with beer kegs for legs, bottles for arms, and a nearly indecipherable vocal affectation. The series of "natural accidents" that occur over the next several pages are meant to school the protagonist in his own skepticism, and they involve everything from raisins to hot air balloons. The humor, you'll soon discover, is not only ingenious,

but unmistakably referential to Poe's own somber reputation. He's making fun of himself.

As an example of Poe-etic verse (sorry, Forry made me do it), I shall forego "The Raven", which is not so much a piece of literature anymore as a pop culture staple and a frequent target of parody. Allow me to introduce, instead, "The City in the Sea": a relatively obscure piece with sound structure, appropriately tragic narrative, and themes somewhat reminiscent of classics like "Annabel Lee": "Resignedly beneath the sky / The melancholy waters lie. / So blend the turrets and shadows there / That all seem pendulous in air. / While from a proud tower in the town / Death looks gigantically down." The poem stays true to the motifs that Poe has always explored most reverently—that life, in the traditional sense, crumbles before dream-states and death—and it does so in a perfect subtlety not found in other examples of Poe's usually heavy-handed verse.

Now I must expound upon the point of language, which I am always wont to do given my near-unhealthy obsession with the medium of words. "Berenice", a short story renowned (of course) for its utter creepiness, is also an uncanny force of cadence and sentence structure. The narrator, an outsider apparently prone to long meditations of an uneasy length, uses his disease to describe his situation in a way that could be sung with a four-string accompaniment: "In the strange anomaly of my existence, feelings with me, *had never been* of the heart, and my passions *always were* of the mind. Through the gray of the early morning—among the trellised shadows of the forest at noonday—and in the silence of my library at night—she had flitted by my eyes, and I had seen her—not as the living and breathing Berenice, but as the Berenice of a dream; not as a being of the earth, earthy, but as the abstraction of such a being; not as a thing to admire, but to analyze, not as an object of love, but as the theme of the most abstruse although desultory speculation." Cue the symphony. A couple of fermatas, too.

Finally, I feel compelled to mention that story which I first read at age fifteen and subsequently cause me to never look at short stories the same way again—the story that convinced me, in fact, that short fiction was a superior form of literature: "The Cask of Amontillado".

*Everything about this story is wrong.* The hero is the villain; the denouement is the climax; the twist is not so much a surprise of plot as a shock of your own loyalties as a reader. The evil lurking here is unparalleled, and yet, there are no ghosts—no supernatural harbingers of doom. Just the loathing and conviction of one common man. His is a soul wrenched from all possible paths, and the terror lies in the discovery that you are rooting for his terrible act instead of condemning it. The monster may as well be the wickedness in your own self. For who hasn't internally cheered at the chilling dialogue highlighting Fortunato's useless, echoing pleas?

"For the love of God, Montressor!"

"Yes," I said, "for the love of God!"

A Selection  
by  
Holly Interlandi

FORGOTTEN LORE

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# Monster MASTER CLASS

## With Dave Elsey

### FOR THIS CREATION YOU WILL NEED...

1. Pros-aide glue.
2. Cabosil (Fumed Silica) or Thickend Pros-aide (Cabopatch or Bondo).
3. Spirit gum.
4. Spirit gum remover.
5. Paper cups with lids.
6. Tongue depressors (from a hobby shop), or just plastic spoons.
7. Latex.
8. Artist's Paint brushes.
9. Translucent powder, or just Talcum Powder.
10. Woochie space arc tips.
11. The teeth I used were called Craven Vampire fangs, and I got them from:  
[http://www.fxwarehouse.info/mm5/merchant.mvc?Screen=PROD&Store\\_Code=FW&Product\\_Code=FXF-010&Category\\_Code=Fang](http://www.fxwarehouse.info/mm5/merchant.mvc?Screen=PROD&Store_Code=FW&Product_Code=FXF-010&Category_Code=Fang)
12. Contact lenses (optional). I use some cool red ones called 'Darth Maul' from FX eyes. Available from here:  
<http://www.fxeyes.com/>
13. Cotton buds.
14. False fingernails (if you are going to show the hands).
15. Proclean.
16. Hair gel.
17. Rubber mask Grease Paint.
18. A water spritzer.
19. Scissors.
20. A fine-toothed comb.
21. Soccer ball - to make a bald cap. Alternatively, you can buy a bald cap from the makeup store.

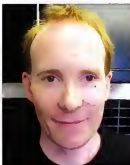
**L**et me lay my Tarot cards on the table here. There's no point in creating a Vampire unless you create something to chill the blood in the veins. Forget pale, romantic, sparkling Vampires. I want to go back to basics.

Here's a little Vampire background. Quite possibly the first and most influential piece of literature was John Polidori's *THE VAMPIRE* in 1819. Then came the penny dreadful *VARNEY THE VAMPIRE* in 1847, followed by Bram Stoker's iconic *DRACULA*, published in 1897.

Movies really fixed Vampires in the public mind, and it's impossible not to mention the power of Bela Lugosi's portrayal of Dracula when talking about the history of these beasts. He set the mold for most adaptations of Stoker's eponymous character right up to the present day. Christopher Lee's Count was equally striking—and, in 1958, glowed in full color for the first time so that Hammer films could allow its audiences to revel in Technicolor bloodshot eyes and dripping fangs. As Dracula he burned with a violent intensity that was as dangerous as it was sexual. Lee's portrayal was by turns charming, ferocious, and genuinely creepy.


Before all of the other movie vampires was Murnau's *NOSFERATU*. The film was made in 1922, years before Universal's *DRACULA*, which didn't come out until 1931 and takes the cake in chilling performances. Many modern Vampires would get their sparkly arses kicked by Max Schreck's rat-like bloodsucker! The makeup is striking and influenced many other shows, including another fantastically disturbing vampire (and one of my favorites!), Mr. Barlow, played by Reggie Nalder, from Stephen King's *SALEM'S LOT* (below). Nalder was a very under appreciated actor with a mysterious past. He had a very cadaverous look, very suited to bad guys. The lower third of his face had been badly scarred by a burn, leaving sinewy wrinkles. The scar left him an interesting and unique look that really complimented the makeup.

All of these creatures and more were going through my fevered brain as I drove into the darkening evening to create this Monster Masterclass. When I arrived, I knew what I had to do...




Ian Mutch from The Propstore of London prepares to channel his inner bloodsucker...

# FOUNDATIONS

A man with short brown hair is shown from the chest up, wearing a black shirt. He has white vampire fangs in his mouth and is using his fingers to adjust them. The background is white.

**STEP 1:** The first thing to do is fit the teeth. Vampires are all about the teeth, and this vampire deserves the full treatment.

A close-up profile of a man's head. He is wearing a white bald cap. A hand is visible on the right side of the frame, adjusting the cap around his ear. The man has vampire fangs in his mouth.

**STEP 2:** Unlike some vampires whose hairstyles range from darkly romantic to utterly ridiculous, a full Nosferatu has dispensed with all that and embraced the 'less hair, more speed' look. Here we fit the latex bald cap to Ian's head, being careful to blend the edges...



**STEP 3:** The hairless theme applies to the eyebrows, here, though some Nosferatu like Count Orlok do sport outrageously extravagant brow hair. It's up to you. Personally, I like both looks. Here, I add the Latex eyebrow covers.



**STEP 4:** As usual, make sure the edges are blended as well as you possibly can.



**STEP 5:** A Nosferatu needs to have bat-like sonar hearing to get around in the dark. Here, I fit the latex ears. These need some custom trimming, but generally fit great.

# FACIAL FEATURES



**STEP 6:** I love Reggie Nalder's portrayal of Kurt Barlow in Salem's Lot, and wanted to get a little of his unique features into the makeup. I especially love his wrinkled mouth. Here, I start adding thickened Pros-Aide to his lower lip to create the look. Don't use too much, as a little goes a long way, and the thicker you make it the longer it will take to dry...

**STEP 7:** Once you have the thickened Pros-Aide smoothly applied you can use a sculpting tool or tongue depressor to mark out the wrinkle shapes...

**STEP 8:** Using a paint brush dipped in water, you can smooth out the wrinkles and really refine them. This step is vital, so take your time, as the final look will be set with a hairdryer once you're happy. I spend some time getting this right, then dry the lip out until the Pros-Aide becomes translucent. Then I powder it to stop the stickiness and to ensure the lip doesn't get damaged.



### STEP 9:


Powder well, then move onto the upper lip. It's much easier if you work on one small section at a time.



**STEP 10:** So, the same procedure here. Apply...



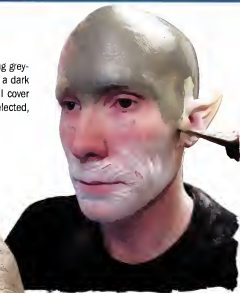
**STEP 11:** Sculpt, blend, and refine...



**STEP 12:** I add puckered cheeks using the same method...

# MAKEUP APPLICATION

**STEP 13:** Now we paint! I mix up a dead-looking grey-brown color using Rubber mask Grease paint. It's kind of a dark color, but I'm going to be adding lots of highlights later. I cover all the surfaces that will show through the costume I've selected, including the hands.



**STEP 14:** Next I add depth to the skin by stippling a highlight color over the base coat. I sometimes use some cotton buds taped into a little bunch of four for this.

**STEP 15:** (Opposite): A black stipple sponge adds more depth and texture to the paint job. I use both a shading color and a highlight color for this. Remember, a flat paint job does your creation no favors. It's much better to bring out the best in your work using highlight and shadow, and for me, this is where the fun is!







**STEP 16:** With the skin looking nicely broken up, I start picking out more details with a detail brush. Here, I'm painting a dark blood red into the wrinkles...





**STEP 17:** Now I add some of the dark red to the eyes. I want them to be dark and scary. It also makes the face more skull-like and will throw out the contact lenses...



**STEP 18:** I also start to paint in the red in all the creases I see around the eyes and forehead. Ian has some cool little wrinkles under his eyes, and I paint these in, too. I just keep going until I'm happy.



**STEP 19:** Did I mention not to forget the hands? Fake fingernails can be added to turn the hands into claws!

# FINISHING TOUCHES

**STEP 21:** Finally, once all the painting is done, it should look something like this. Scary, huh? Now I just add contact lenses and those pointy teeth.





PART 4 OF 4 OF KEVIN BURNS' BRIDE  
OF FRANKSTEIN COMIC—FROM WHEN  
HE WAS ONLY SIXTEEN-YEARS-OLD!

SHE'S ALIVE! ALIVE!!



THEY RAISE THE TABLE UPRIGHT AND THE NOW-LIVING BEING  
RAISES HER ARMS OUTWARD.



AS THE LAST OF THE HEAD BANDAGES ARE REMOVED, THE  
VISION OF THE VITALIZED WOMAN WRINGS AN EXPRESSION OF  
AWE FROM THE THIN LIPS OF PRETORIUS WHO EXCLAIMS...



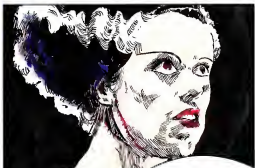
WHILE SHE COLLAPSES FROM TEMPORARY  
EXHAUSTION...



...PRETORIUS AND FRANKSTEIN CARE-  
FULLY UNWIND THE BANDAGES FROM  
THEIR CREATION.



SEVEN FEET TALL SHE STANDS. HER HEAD DARTS ABOUT LIKE A BIRD. THE PERSONIFICATION OF LIFE GIVING ELECTRICITY!





THE MONSTER, NOW AWAKENED FROM HIS DRUGGED SLEEP, NOW APPEARS TO CLAIM HIS BRIDE.



EEEEEEEEAAAAAAHHHHHHH!!!!



TERRIFIED OF HER INTENDED MATE, SHE TURNS TO FRANKENSTEIN FOR HELP. HENRY LEADS HER ACROSS THE LAB TO A COUCH.

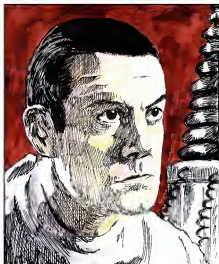


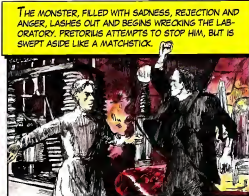
THE MONSTER SADDENED AND CONFUSED IS DETERMINED TO MAKE ANOTHER ATTEMPT.



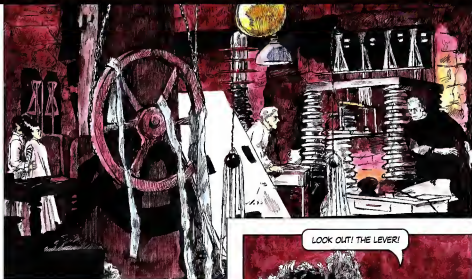
GET BACK! GET BACK!!



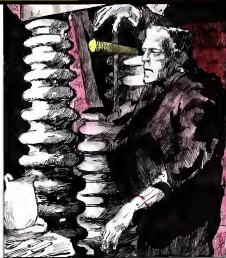




PRETORIUS THEN SHOVS A TABLE OF MEDICAL EQUIPMENT IN THE MONSTER'S PATH BUT IT, TOO, IS SWEEP ASIDE.



THE MONSTER STOPS AT A BANK OF SWITCHES AND RAISES HIS HAND TO GRASP ONE.



LOOK OUT! THE LEVER!



GET AWAY FROM THAT LEVER...YOU'LL  
BLOW US ALL TO ATOMS!



SUDDENLY, ELIZABETH, WHO HAS BROKEN FREE  
OF HER BONDS AND ESCAPED FROM THE CAVE,  
COMES POUNDING AT THE DOOR.

HENRY! HENRY, DARLING!  
PLEASE LET ME IN!



GET BACK! GET BACK!!

I WON'T UNLESS YOU COME.

BUT I CAN'T LEAVE THEM! I CAN'T!

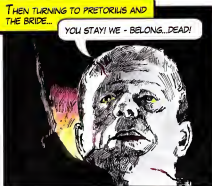


YES! GO! YOU LIVE...

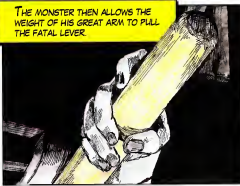


THEN TURNING TO PRETORIUS AND  
THE BRIDE...

YOU STAY! WE - BELONG...DEAD!



THE MONSTER THEN ALLOWS THE  
WEIGHT OF HIS GREAT ARM TO PULL  
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No discussion of Edgar Rice Burroughs would be complete without mentioning fantasy's greatest artist: Frank Frazetta, who interpreted a great number of Burroughs' works, from John Carter and Tarzan to Canson Napier of Venus. Despite having been created decades after the original novels, Frazetta's artworks are often seen as the

definitive interpretations of Burroughs' work.

But beyond Burroughs, Frazetta's artwork crossed more media and genres than any other contemporary artist. And with so many works of art to draw from, it is often hard to track down so many of these amazing pieces.

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## NEXT ISSUE:

WE JOURNEY BACK TO THE COLLINSPOUT OF PAST AND PRESENT TO UNCOVER ALL THINGS DARK SHADOWS. FEATURING INTERVIEWS WITH THE CASTS AND CREWS FROM BOTH THE CLASSIC SHOW AND UPCOMING BIG SCREEN VERSIONS, THIS ISSUE OF FM WILL BRING THIS GROUNDBREAKING SERIES TO LIFE ONCE AGAIN. JASON EDMISTON (254 VINCENT PRICE, 255 VOLDERMORT) HAS CREATED ANOTHER FANTASTIC COVER, BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN BOTH INCARNATIONS.

WE'LL ALSO TAKE A TRIP THROUGH ANOTHER CLASSIC TV SHOW AS WE VISIT THE WORLD OF THE OUTER LIMITS. ENJOY A GUIDED TOUR THROUGH SERIES HIGHLIGHTS AND REMINISCE OVER THE SERIES' CLASSIC MONSTERS. BOB LIZARRAGA (259 TWILIGHT ZONE) RENDERS HIS FANTASTIC VISION OF SOME OF THE SERIES' MOST MEMORABLE IMAGES.

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# FAMOUS MONSTERS WHAT IF?

A LOOK AT PROJECTS THAT COULD HAVE  
BEEN BUT MAY NEVER BE...

## JOHN CARTER OF MARS

by Nick Ekum

The first attempt to bring the Edgar Rice Burroughs character to the screen began in 1931 when MGM and Bob Clampett attempted to create a rotoscoped version of the story. The test footage received negative feedback from exhibitors, who stated that an Earthman on Mars was too bizarre for American audiences.

Another adaptation was planned during the 1950s, when Ray Harryhausen expressed interest in filming the novels, but it never materialized. In the 1980s, Disney purchased the rights. John McTiernan (PREDATOR, LAST ACTION HERO) was to direct and Tom Cruise (INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE, LEGEND) was approached to star. The film never got off the ground because McTiernan concluded that the special effects of the time could not do the story justice. The rights eventually returned to the Burroughs estate.

In 2003, producer James Jacks (THE MUMMY) was inspired by Harry Knowles' autobiography to have Paramount purchase the JOHN CARTER rights. Knowles was brought on as a producer and convinced his friend Robert Rodriguez (FROM DUSK TILL DAWN, SIN CITY) to direct the script written by Mark Protosevich (THE CELL, I AM LEGEND). Rodriguez was planning to have Frank Frazetta, a famous John Carter artist, serve as the film's designer, and the film was to be shot on all digital sets. Production fell through after Robert Rodriguez left the Directors Guild of America over a disagreement involving comic artist Frank Miller receiving a credit as co-director of SIN CITY. Paramount was required to hire a Director's Guild director, so they hired Kerry Conran (SKY CAPTAIN AND THE WORLD OF TOMORROW), while Elhren Kruger (SCREAM 3, THE RING) was brought in to rewrite the script. Conran eventually left to work on another project, and Paramount hired John Favreau (IRON MAN, COWBOYS AND ALIENS) to direct and brought on Mark Fergus (CHILDREN OF MEN, IRON MAN) to write. Their version would have combined the first three books (A PRINCESS OF MARS, THE GOD OF MARS, and THE WARLORD OF MARS) and would have used practical effects. In 2006, Paramount decided to focus on the STAR TREK reboot and choose not to renew the JOHN CARTER rights.

Disney acquired the rights in 2007 and hired Mark Andrews (STAR WARS: THE CLONE WARS, SAMURAI JACK) to write with Andrew Stanton (FINDING NEMO, WALL-E) directing. It took over 80 years, but John Carter will finally make his big screen debut on March 9, 2012.



# FAMOUS MONSTERS 261

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